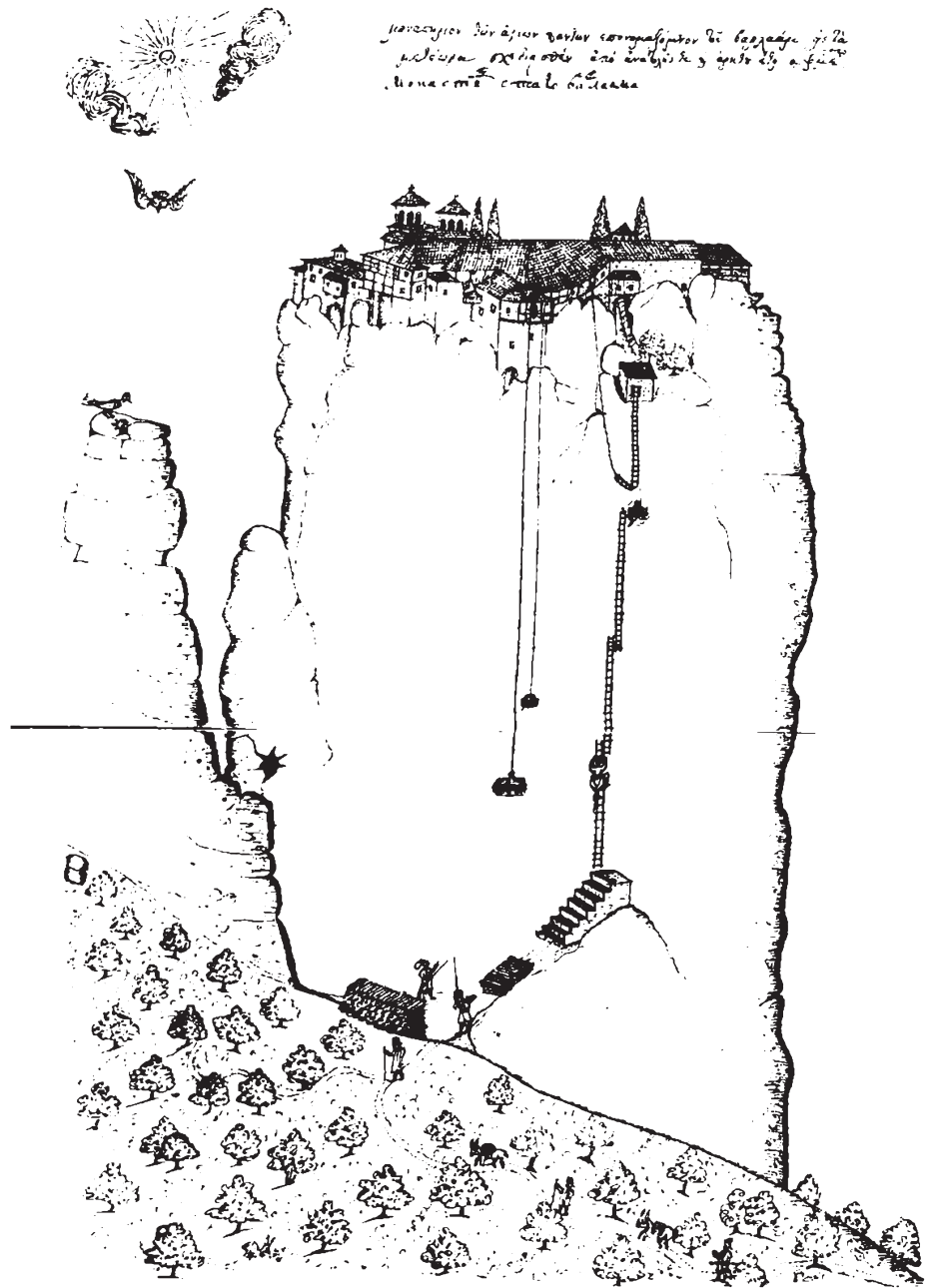




THE ORTHODOX PILGRIM

First Issue | Great Lent 2025



CONTENTS



THE EDITORS	3	FOREWORD
THE EDITORS OF THE ORTHODOX WORD	4	THE ORTHODOX WORD
HIEROMONK SERAPHIM OF PLATINA 1934-1982	6	
	8	FOR HIS SOUL PLEASED THE LORD
	10	A MAN NOT OF THIS WORLD
	12	WITH THE SAINTS GIVE REST, O CHRIST, TO THE SOUL OF THY SERVANT
	16	A MIGHTY PEN IS STILLED
	18	CONFESSOR OF TRUE ORTHODOXY
	19	THE CANONIZATION OF FATHER SERAPHIM ROSE
	21	ORTHODOXY AND THE RELIGION OF THE FUTURE
	28	THE JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW
HERMOGEN, BISHOP OF PSKOF AND PORKHOF	34	ON THE HOLY SACRAMENTS OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH
F. A. GOLDER	39	FATHER HERMAN - ALASKA'S SAINT
	45	THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL AT SITKA
METROPOLITAN INNOCENTIUS	48	TO THE MISSIONARY AT NUSHAGAK
	53	CHRONICLES OF THE ORTHODOX MISSION IN THE FAR EAST
	55	THE NECESSITY OF ESTABLISHING ANOTHER MISSION
BISHOP IGNATIUS BRIANCHANINOV	57	
	59	THE VISION OF CHRIST
SAINT JOHN OF KRONSTADT	61	
I. M. KONTSEVICH	63	ST. JOHN OF KRONSTADT AND THE SPIRITUAL CRISIS OF RUSSIA
	71	MY LIFE IN CHRIST
	76	THE NEW RUSSIAN MARTYRS
GLEB PODMOSHENSKY	79	BISHOP INNOCENT
ABP. JOHN MAXIMOVITCH	82	THE ORTHODOX VENERATION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD
SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM	83	GOD - RIGHTEOUS JUDGE AND MERCIFUL FATHER



hesychia.eu/index.php/the-orthodox-pilgrim/
 archive.org/details/@hesychia_eu
 feedback ⇄ contact@hesychia.eu

SOURCES

Articles

The Orthodox Word ⇄ archive.org * *Orthodox Life* ⇄ orthodoxlifemagazines.blogspot.com
Living Orthodoxy ⇄ archive.org * *Orthodox America* ⇄ roca.org
Russian Orthodox American Messenger ⇄ archive.org

Illustrations

Vassili Grigorovitch-Barski / монах Василий Григорович-Барский (1701–1747)

Quotations

St. Nikolai of Ohrid and Zhicha (Velimirovic): *The Prologue of Ohrid: Lives of Saints, Hymns, Reflections, and Homilies for Every Day of the Year* ⇄ rocor.org.au



The Editors

FOREWORD

I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?
St. Luke 12 :49

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

With God's help, we present you the first issue of *The Orthodox Pilgrim*, a periodical dedicated to the Orthodox Faith.

Inspired by **Father Seraphim Rose's** pioneering work in the second half of the last century, we wish to bring back to light the gems of the Orthodox Tradition, forgotten by the contemporary Christians. Father Seraphim's time was one of spiritual effervescence in the English-speaking orthodoxy, with many translations of the Fathers of the Church and a good number of periodicals being published.

For the last five-six years, we had the opportunity to explore the archives of *The Orthodox Word*, *Orthodox Life*, *Living Orthodoxy*, and some other orthodox magazines, and we realized that many of the issues treated in these publications are as important to the Orthodox faithful today, as they were 50-60 years ago. Besides, many of the articles form a good introduction to the Orthodox Faith and they might be of great help to the new converts.

FOR TO DIE IS NOT EVIL, BUT TO DIE AN EVIL DEATH. ON THIS ACCOUNT HE SAID MOREOVER, "I AM COME TO CAST FIRE UPON THE EARTH." AND THIS HE SAID, TO DECLARE THE VEHEMENCE AND WARMTH OF THE LOVE WHICH HE REQUIRED. FOR, BECAUSE HE LOVED US VERY MUCH, SO HE WILL LIKEWISE BE LOVED OF US. AND THESE SAYINGS WOULD STRENGTHEN • THE PERSONS PRESENT ALSO, AND LIFT THEM HIGHER. "FOR IF THOSE OTHERS," SAITH HE, "ARE TO DESPISE KINSMEN, AND CHILDREN, AND PARENTS, IMAGINE WHAT MANNER OF MEN YE THEIR TEACHERS OUGHT TO BE. SINCE NEITHER WILL THE HARDSHIPS STOP WITH YOU, BUT WILL ALSO PASS ON TO THE REST. FOR SINCE I AM COME BRINGING GREAT BLESSINGS, I DEMAND ALSO GREAT OBEDIENCE, AND PURPOSE OF HEART."

St. John Chrysostom : *Homily XXXV on the Gospel of Saint Matthew*
Philip Schaff, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series I, Volume 10

Father Seraphim and the hierarchs of his time were more concerned with the practical aspects of our Faith than with theological and mystical debates, and we wish to follow their example regarding the editorial policy of our publication.

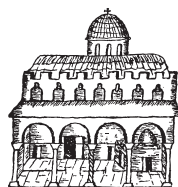
As you will notice in our first issue, the main topics that we will cover are the **Lives of the Saints**, the **Great Hierarchs of the 19th and 20th centuries**, their lives and their writings, the **history of the Orthodox Church**, the writings of the **Pillars of Orthodoxy**.

You can send us your comments, suggestions, or any feedback at contact@hesychia.eu.

The digital version of our publication has a dedicated web page at hesychia.eu/index.php/the-orthodox-pilgrim/ and at the same address you will also find the links to all our source material.

At the beginning of our Pilgrimage, we ask for your prayers in order to keep this fire kindled and we place our endeavor under Saint Seraphim of Platina's protection.

✠ **St. Matthew 10 :**
37-38 : *He that loveth
father or mother more than
me is not worthy of me:
and he that loveth son or
daughter more than me is
not worthy of me. And he
that taketh not his cross,
and followeth after me, is
not worthy of me.*



The Editors of *The Orthodox Word*

THE ORTHODOX WORD



The Orthodox Word, 1965, Vol. 1, No. 1, Jan.- Feb., p. 17-20

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

St. Matthew 28: 19-20

THE ORTHODOX WORD has one single reason for existing: to preach the truths of Orthodox Christianity, and in so doing to draw together those of like mind so as to offer a united witness of these truths. It is addressed to Orthodox of all nationalities, to converts to the Orthodox faith, and to those outside the Church who desire to learn more of her faith and practice.

The editors are fully conscious of their total inadequacy to fulfill the intentions thus set forth. No one man, or group of men, can himself speak for the Church of Christ. It is nonetheless possible to speak from within the Church, in conformity with Orthodox tradition; and it is this that we shall attempt to do. The editors are members of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and obedient to the Synod of that Church; but our collaborators will include members of other Orthodox Churches who are concerned to preserve Orthodox truth and tradition in their fulness. Outwardly, it is true, the Orthodox Churches present a divided front to the world. Historical circumstances since even before the fall of Constantinople in the fifteenth century have dictated the development of national Orthodox Churches in relative isolation from each other; and in the twentieth century modernist ideas and capitulation to Communist governments have caused division within some Orthodox Churches and swerved many from the path of faithfulness to our Lord. But in all Orthodox countries today there is at least a faithful remnant

of believers who stand ready to witness their faith uncompromisingly before the contemporary world, even as far as to share the martyrdom which many of our Orthodox brothers have suffered in this century. Among such believers there exists a unity that is quite independent of international or Pan-Orthodox conferences; it is the unity of all who rightly believe and confess the Orthodox faith. The Orthodox Church of Christ is one and indivisible in all her members who have remained faithful to the truth which each local Church has possessed from its foundation.

Of reliable material concerning the Orthodox Church comparatively little has as yet appeared in English, whereas in several of the traditional Orthodox languages—in particular Greek and Russian—there is a veritable treasure-house of texts that await translation. One of the purposes of this journal will be to begin to open this treasure-house and distribute its riches to those who hunger for them. It is, after all, the proper function of a treasure, not to sit idle in a closed vault, but to be used; the treasures of Holy Orthodoxy are above all a current currency the value of which can best be proved in the lives of contemporary Christians.

Among the most important Orthodox treasures are the lives of the saints, which give us examples of a true life in Christ. The lives of recent saints are no less instructive in this regard than the lives of the early saints; and the inclusion of both in *The*

Orthodox Word should serve to emphasize the fact that the Christian life has not become outmoded in the contemporary world, but in fact has changed not at all throughout the centuries. The twentieth century too has had its saints: one of the very greatest of Russian saints died as recently as 1908, and the martyrs of this century probably outnumber those of the entire age of martyrs that sustained the early Church†.

Another valuable Orthodox treasure consists of the writings of the saints and holy fathers of the Church, both on the practical problems of the Christian life and on more general subjects such as Orthodox doctrine, the sacraments, Church history, services, and the major feast-days of the Church year. Yet another source of spiritual riches for Orthodox Christians are the icons of our Lord, His Most Holy Mother, the saints, and feast-days. It is planned that at least one of these will be reproduced in each issue, together with an explanation of its meaning and an account of its history and miracles.

This, then, will be the primary function of *The Orthodox Word*: to make more generally available some of the basic sources of the Orthodox faith. In some cases this will involve explanatory or introductory essays, so as to make accessible to contemporary readers material which might be easily misinterpreted by those who are not intimately acquainted with the life and thought of the Church. Besides this, the periodical will present information on contemporary happenings in the Orthodox world. Orthodoxy, it need hardly be said, is now "in the news." The dispersal of Orthodox of every nationality into the West, the increase of converts to Orthodoxy in Western Europe and America, the state of the suffering Church behind the Iron Curtain, meetings on an official as well as a personal level with Roman Catholics and Protestants, as for example at the Vatican Council and in the World Council of Churches, and critical events within the Orthodox world itself—all these

and other factors combine to attract the attention of a Western world which, until recently, had virtually ignored the existence of the Orthodox Church for centuries, or had regarded her at best as a part of the fossilized East.

But if Orthodoxy has become "newsworthy," by no means all of the news about her has been good. The position of Orthodoxy in the world, her relations with other Churches, and even the relations of Orthodox Churches among themselves, are quite complicated and they must be viewed critically and soundly interpreted in the light of Orthodox truth and tradition, with the intention of remaining absolutely faithful to these, in spirit as well as letter. In their own poor way the editors

of *The Orthodox Word* will attempt to fulfill this solemn duty.

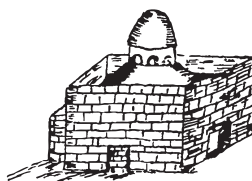
Always we shall hope to be guided by the awareness that governs the lives of all faithful Orthodox Christians, an awareness which no temporary complications should efface. The Orthodox Church is not merely

one Church among many, not merely a "fourth major faith," but the one true Church of our Lord Jesus Christ to which all men are called and against which "the gates of hell shall not prevail" (St. Matt. 16:18). She is not merely one of many "newsworthy" items, but the sole container of the whole mystery of God's creation and His plan for mankind.

It is thus with a basically missionary purpose that this journal has been begun. That is why our patron and heavenly protector is Father Herman of Alaska, one of the first Orthodox missionaries to the American continent and exemplar of the life of asceticism, prayer, and faithfulness to our Lord's commandments to which every Christian, according to his strength, is called. It is as the joint labor of a brotherhood in the name of Father Herman that we present this journal, with an earnest appeal to others of like mind to join us, with articles and translations, with comments, and most of all with prayer, that this labor may be, with God's blessing, for the good use of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

† See: "The Canonization of Father Seraphim Rose by Metropolitan Agafangel of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad" in this issue





Great Orthodox Hierarchs of the 19th & 20th Centuries

HIEROMONK SERAPHIM OF PLATINA

1934–1982



Orthodox Life, Vol. 32, No. 4, July-August, 1982, p. 31–34

HIEROMONK SERAPHIM (ROSE), co-founder and co-editor of *The Orthodox Word* and co-founder of the St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood and Monastery at Platina, California, reposed in the Lord on September 2, 1982 n.s. Born in 1934 in California, he was raised in a typical American Protestant family. He graduated from Pomona College in the Los Angeles area, and later received his M. A. in Chinese (Mandarin) from the University of California at Berkeley.

He first encountered true Orthodoxy as a result of the lecture tour of newly-graduated Jordanville seminarian Gleb (Father Herman) Podmoshensky in 1961. By 1963 the establishment of the St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, as a missionary endeavor toward the conversion of English-speaking people, under the aegis of Blessed Archbishop John (Maximovitch) (+ 1966) had been decided upon. The brotherhood began with headquarters on Geary Boulevard in San Francisco next door to the Cathedral which was then in process of construction. *The Orthodox Word* began publication with the January-February issue of 1965. The first issues were handset and printed on a hand-operated and hand-powered press. In addition to the publication of the magazine, an icon and book store was operated. Father Seraphim, with his modest smile and meek manner, was there to greet customers and answer questions, and let his "light shine!"

By 1967, in pursuance of long-range and long-standing plans, search began for a suitable location for

a skete, so that full-fledged monasticism could be undertaken. Vladika John having reposed in 1966, the brotherhood now had a heavenly patron to assist them in all their righteous endeavors. After considerable searching throughout northern California, the present location of the St. Herman of Alaska Monastery was decided upon. Living quarters and the printing shop were made ready so that the two-hundred-and-fifty-mile move northward from San Francisco was accomplished by Dormition of 1969. For one year the two members of the brotherhood labored in solitude and silence before they received tonsure to the small schema in October of 1970. In the previous August of 1970, St. Herman of Alaska had been glorified in the Cathedral of the Holy Virgin, the Joy of All That Sorrow, in San Francisco. The brotherhood had labored long and tirelessly to bring this about, and to make known the wonders worked by St. Herman, and his importance for the Orthodox Church, especially in America.

Father Seraphim belonged to that rare species, the ascetics. His labors, who can-tell? Perhaps only Father Herman. But others have been witnesses. Many were the nights when his attention could be had only with difficulty, because he was so enwrapped in the Jesus Prayer even while at table. He demonstrated the virtues as few people in our time are capable of doing. He believed implicitly in the teaching of the Fathers that obedience to one's spiritual father and director must be given

without question. He seldom ever allowed himself to become aroused enough for one to call it anger.

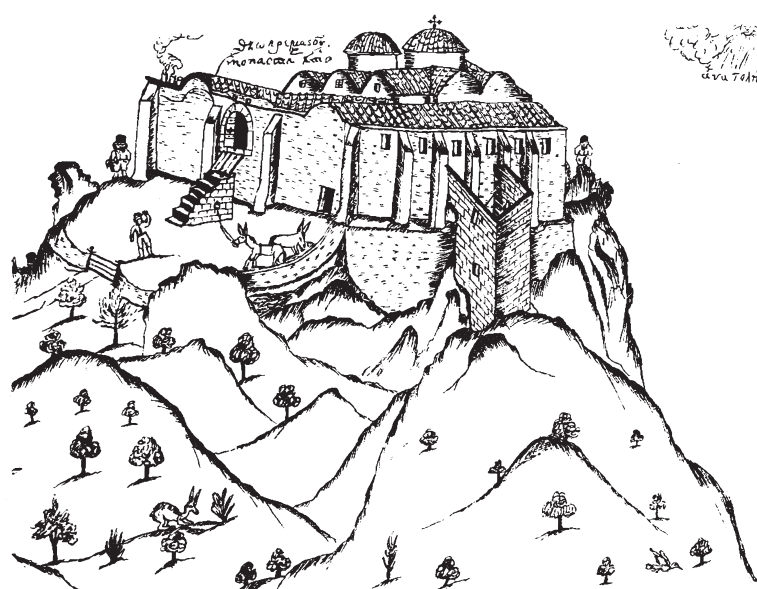
He built a small hut, approximately 6×10 feet, on the mountainside, so that he had a refuge from ever-increasing numbers of visitors. He was blessed to enjoy this refuge for seven years, where he prepared many articles for publication, where he prayed and prepared himself to leave this world where he was indeed a stranger and a pilgrim, and to enter his heavenly homeland. He was ordained hierodeacon in January 1977 and was raised to the rank of hieromonk on the Sunday of the Myrrhbearers the same year, so that after eight years of desert-dwelling he and Father Herman were able to celebrate the Holy Mysteries.

Father Seraphim was an inspiration for thousands of people. He gave some of the most inspiring sermons ever uttered in the English language. His constant counsel was: "Censure yourself. Never excuse yourself. If you must, or think you must, give way to a weakness, then be certain that you recognize it as a weakness, and a sin. But see your own faults and condemn not your brother!" During

the latter portion of his life, Father Seraphim continually emphasized the need for spiritual attentiveness in preparation for struggles to come. He seemed to have an awareness, a foreknowledge, of apocalyptic times ahead. His message was conveyed in the well-known phrase: "It is later than you think."

Writing both in Russian and in English, Father Seraphim was able to produce a torrent of articles and books in a relatively short span of time—only 17 years—covering every conceivable subject of interest and importance to the Orthodox reader, including lives of saints, divine services, contemporary problems, and theology. He also translated many works, making them available in English for the first time—an incomparable service to English-speaking Orthodox Christians.

Father Seraphim accomplished more for the glory of God and the spread of true Orthodox Christianity than any other person born on the American continent. May God grant him rest with His saints, where the light of His countenance shall visit him, and may his memory be eternal!





Fr. Alexey Young

HIEROMONK SERAPHIM OF PLATINA

➤ FOR HIS SOUL PLEASED THE LORD ◀



Orthodox America, Issue 22, Vol III, No. 2, August-September, 1982

IN ONE OF the last sermons I heard him give, Hieromonk Seraphim said quietly and simply, as he had said so many times before: "Be kind to one another. Smile, and be cheerful. Carry one another's burdens for the sake of Christ."

The death of Fr. Seraphim on August 20/September 2 has removed from the midst of this small, struggling mission of St. Herman of Alaska a faithful servant of God who, while able to grasp deep theological principles, never once strayed from the path of Gospel simplicity, fulfilling the Scriptural description of a righteous man, who "bringeth forth wisdom" (Wis. 4:11). What was Fr. Seraphim to us?

As our readers know, he was a contributing editor: in addition to editorials and signed articles, he also produced many translations (for which he never took credit) and unsigned articles. More importantly, he was the constant conscience of our staff, encouraging us and urging us on, but also gently reminding us when we had (in one of his favorite expressions) "missed the point." And what was the point? *To bring basic Orthodox Christianity to as many Americans as will listen.* Nothing more: an apparently simple task; but also, nothing less: a labor of gigantic proportions. He believed in us, stubborn and stupid as we usually were, and more than that, he believed in the importance and value of this work and had great expectations for it.

I write these words, now, with tears, for Fr. Seraphim was my co-worker and collaborator as well as my conscience. I never sat down at the typewriter without Fr. Seraphim figuratively looking over my shoulder; I knew that I would never have to trust myself. Now, my heart breaks, and only Christ can console.

Many may not know that Fr. Seraphim was also the co-editor of the scholarly-theological publication, "The Orthodox Word," and cofounder of the, Brotherhood of St. Herman of Alaska, as well as the author of many book. Of these equally important aspects of his life it must be for others to write. For myself, I would like to reveal to our readers a little of what Fr. Seraphim, the priest, the pastor, was.

The essence of this priest-monk could be found in his sermons, which were always brief, to the point, intended to touch our hearts and "humble us down" (as he liked to say), and show us what Christ expects of us. I remember the first time he came to our Etna Mission to serve Divine Liturgy. For some reason now forgotten, the Liturgy was in the middle of the night. As he turned from the Holy Table to read the Gospel, a candle in one hand illuminating both the Sacred Scriptures and his pale face, I thought to myself: This is what it was like in the catacombs; and this is what it is like in the persecuted underground Church of Russia today! In these sermons we saw a heart as warm

and loving as could be found anywhere in this cold world, and a mind uncluttered and penetrating, produced not by this dismal world, but by grace. "Only struggle a little bit more," he would urge us, "Carry your crosses without complaining; don't think you're anything special; don't justify your sins and weaknesses, but see yourself as you really are; and, especially, love one another." The words of Christ. Indeed, Fr. Seraphim showed forth Christ to us in both word and example.

In conversation he was the proverbial "man of few words." He had no interest in idle chatter, seldom expressed a personal preference for anything, and disliked fakery of all kinds, often speaking of the "Disneyland" mentality of America, which was making it impossible for people to seek and find the truth. He worried about the fact that most of us are "unconscious": we are so abysmally ignorant of the great truths of our Faith that we do not share Orthodoxy with others. "Be awake, aware, informed!" he would plead. "Don't leave it to others to understand and 'digest' Orthodoxy for you; and don't keep Orthodoxy to yourselves as though it were some private treasure: share it."

In Church life, Fr. Seraphim represented a particular view (which is also the dominant position of our Russian Orthodox Church Abroad); he called it the "Royal Path" of moderation and balance in all things. This was not a popular view, however: some, whose concept of Orthodoxy had been reduced to an ecumenist position, thought him a dangerous fanatic; others, suffering from "zeal without understanding," accused him of betraying Orthodoxy. All this he suffered, being maligned both in person, by letter, and in the press.

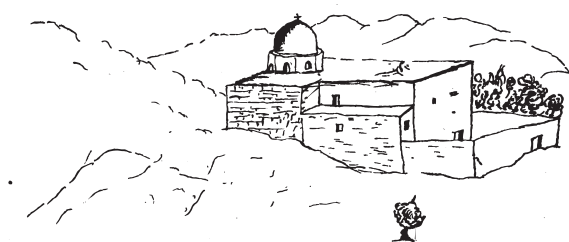
Still others, who could not understand either his writings or his sermons, and judged him primarily by his appearance, saw his dusty and tattered

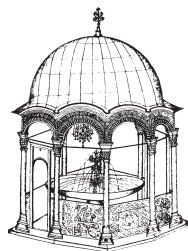
robes and long, matted beard, and disdained him. He did not fit their "image" of a priest or a monk. Behind his back he was more than once called a "dirty monk." The fact is, he was a true monk, an angel in the flesh, dead to this world but alive to the next, and more concerned about purifying his soul than adorning his body. His example was a reproach to us all.

Of course, while he lived we did not fully appreciate him. We took him for granted, just as we always do with those we love. We thought that in spite of his fragile health he would nonetheless always "be there." He had only just turned 48—still a young man—with so much work unfinished; his course as an Orthodox Christian only lasted just over twenty short years. And then, after a brief but terrifyingly intense illness, he was gone, so that, "having been a little chastised he shall be greatly rewarded, for God proved him and found him worthy of Himself" (Wis. 3:4).

In the *Praktikos* there is found this passage: "The death of his father was announced to a certain monk. He turned to the messenger who had brought him the news and replied: 'Stop your blasphemies. My father is immortal!'" That was how I felt when I received the news of Fr. Seraphim's repose: he is not dead; he is now truly alive, in Christ! He has gone to the next world to be with his beloved Archbishop John, St. Paisius, and the saints of Gaul and the Northern Thebaid, whose lives he had translated and printed.

What a man was this! Brothers and sisters—our dear Readers—we shall not soon see his like again! I am filled with gratitude to God for having given him to us, even for such a brief time. And I believe with all my heart and soul that he has now heard the blessed voice of the Master speak these precious words.





Rassophore-monk, Reader Laurence Fr. Seraphim's first godchild

HIEROMONK SERAPHIM OF PLATINA

➤ A MAN NOT OF THIS WORLD ◀



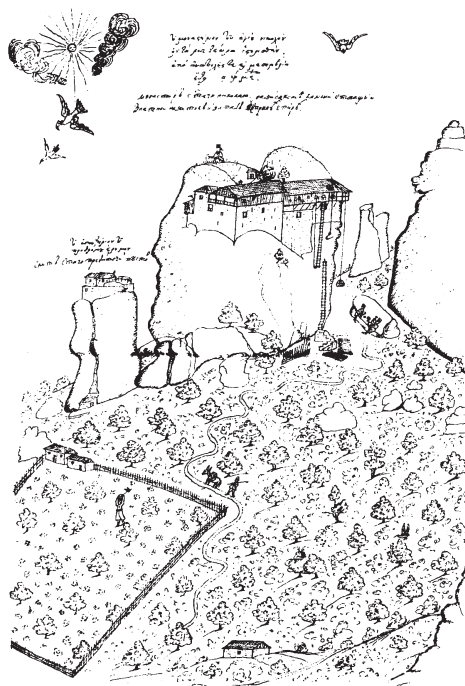
Orthodox America, Issue 22, Vol III, No. 2, August-September, 1982

HIEROMONK SERAPHIM ROSE, co-founder and co-editor of *The Orthodox Word* and cofounder of the St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood and Monastery at Platina, California, reposed in the Lord on Sept. 2, 1982 n.s. Born in 1934 in California, he was raised in a typical American Protestant family. He graduated from Pomona College in the Los Angeles area, and later received his M.A. in Chinese (Mandarin) from the University of California at Berkeley.

He first encountered true Orthodoxy as a result of the lecture of newly-graduated Jordanville seminarian Gleb (Father Herman) Podmoshensky in 1961. By 1963 the establishment of the St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, as a missionary endeavor toward the conversion of English-speaking people, under the aegis of Blessed Archbishop John (Maximovitch) (+1,966) had been decided upon. The Brotherhood began with headquarters on Geary Boulevard in San Francisco next door to the Cathedral which was then in process of construction. *The Orthodox Word* began

publication with the January-February issue of 1965. The first issues were handset and printed on hand-operated and hand-powered press. In addition to the publication of the magazine, an icon and book store was operated. Father Seraphim, with his modest smile and meek manner was there to greet customers and answer questions, and let his "light shine!"

By 1967, in pursuance of long-range and long-standing plans, search began for a suitable location for a skete, so that full-fledged monasticism could be undertaken. Vladika John having reposed in 1966, the Brotherhood now had a heavenly patron to assist them in all their righteous endeavors. After, considerable searching throughout northern California, the present location of the St. Herman of Alaska Monastery was decided upon. Living quarters and the printing shop were made ready so that the two-hundred-and-fifty-mile move northward from San Francisco was accomplished by Dormition of 1969. For one year the two members of the brotherhood labored



in solitude and silence before they received t^{on}sure to the Small Schema in October of 1970. In the previous August of 1970, St. Herman of Alaska had been glorified in the Cathedral of the Holy Virgin the Joy of All That Sorrow, in San Francisco. The Brotherhood had labored long and tirelessly to bring this about, and to make known the wonders worked by St. Herman, and his importance for the Orthodox Church,, especially in America.

Father Seraphim belonged to that rare species, the ascetics. His labors, who can tell? Perhaps only Father Herman. But others have been witnesses. Many were the nights when his attention could be had only with difficulty, because he was so enrapt in the Jesus Prayer even while at table. He demonstrated the virtues as few people in our time are capable of doing. He believed implicitly in the teaching of the Fathers that obedience to one's spiritual father and director must be given without question. He seldom ever allowed himself to become aroused enough for one to call it anger.

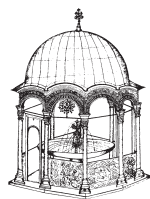
He built a small hut, approximately 6 × 10 feet, on the mountainside, so that he had a refuge from ever-increasing numbers of visitors. He was blessed to enjoy this refuge for seven years, where he prepared many:—articles for publication, where he prayed and prepared himself to leave this world where he was indeed a stranger and a pilgrim, and to enter his heavenly homeland. He was ordained hierodeacon in January 1977 and was raised to the rank of hieromonk on the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearers the same year, so

that after eightwFather Seraphim was an inspiration for thousands of people. He gave some of the most inspiring sermons ever uttered in the English language. His constant counsel was: "Censure yourself. Never excuse yourself. If you must, or think you must, give way to a weakness, then be certain that you recognize it as a weakness, and a sin. But see your own faults and condemn not your brother!" During the latter portion of his life, Father Seraphim continually emphasized the need for spiritual attentiveness in preparation for struggles to come. He seemed to have an awareness, a foreknowledge, of apocalyptic times ahead. His message was conveyed in the well-known phrase: "It is later than you think."

Writing both in Russian and English, Fr. Seraphim was able to produce a torrent of articles and books in a relatively short span of time—only 17 years—covering every conceivable subject of interest and importance to the Orthodox reader, including lives of saints, divine services, contemporary problems, and theology. He also translated many works, making them available in English for the first time—an incomparable service to English-speaking Orthodox Christians.

Father Seraphim accomplished more for the glory of God and the spread of true Orthodox Christianity than any other person born on the American continent. May God grant him rest with His saints, where the light of His countenance shall visit him. And may his memory be eternal!

There is no greater honor or greater calling on earth than to be a Christian. When the judge-torturer Sevirus asked the young Peter Apselamus: "Of what lineage are you?" Peter replied: "I am a Christian." The judge further inquired of him: "What rank are you?" To this, Peter responded: "There is no greater or better rank than that of a Christian." Father John Kronstadt writes: "The whole world is but a cobweb in comparison to the human soul of a Christian." The Christian is an earthen vessel into which is poured divine power and light. Whether this vessel is placed on a golden royal throne or whether it is lowered into a dark hut of a beggar, its value will be neither magnified nor diminished. Does not gold have the same value whether it is wrapped in a silk handkerchief or in a cabbage leaf?



HIEROMONK SERAPHIM OF PLATINA

WITH THE SAINTS GIVE REST, O CHRIST, TO THE SOUL OF THY SERVANT



Orthodox America, Issue 22, Vol III, No. 2, August-September, 1982

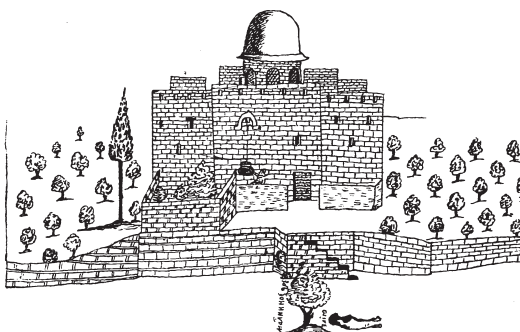
THE WEATHER HAD been near-perfect all summer. And so it was on the eve of Transfiguration when the brethren of the St. Herman of Alaska Monastery made their traditional climb up to the top of their mountain to a spot called "Transfiguration Skete," singing the Vigil service as they went. The sky was already dark and the stars were visible as they descended the back of the mountain, their voices carrying the beautiful stichera into the wilderness, and their candles flickering like a chain of lights. When they reached the large cross marking a corner of the monastery property, they stopped and, after the candles were extinguished, Fr. Seraphim gave a short sermon. It was one of his favorite feasts. Like his beloved St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, he loved to look up at night into the heavens. Seeing the starry sky he was always inspired by that mystery of divinity to which we sinners are called, the wonder of Transfiguration. This is the message he spoke that night: "Our home is in heaven. Never forget that for which we are created." Little did anyone suspect that the next morning he would serve Liturgy for the last time here on earth.

Soon afterwards Father Seraphim became ill. He was of fragile health and it was not unusual for him to be sick. It was never easy to tell just how ill he was because he never complained. In a few days, however, when the pain became

very severe, he agreed to be taken to the hospital. It came as a shock to everyone when, after two serious operations in which the doctors had to remove a massive blockage in the intestine caused by decayed tissue, Fr. Seraphim was given only a two percent chance of recovery. For those close to him, it was as though a great cataclysmic event had taken place. The nightmarish intensity of the days that followed—the feelings of shock, of helplessness, bewilderment, anxiety, loneliness, despair—is hard to describe. One could not help thinking of the approaching feast of Dormition. Was the Mother of God going to take her faithful servant?

On the eve of the feast, many from the St. Herman Mission gathered at the Surety-of-Sinners Chapel in Redding to celebrate a midnight Liturgy and there to pray fervently for the recovery of their beloved Fr. Seraphim. Fr. Alexey Young who served the Liturgy, prepared to take the Holy Gifts to Fr. Seraphim. At the hospital Fr. Herman was already keeping vigil. As the Liturgy ended there was a call from the hospital announcing that visitors were allowed one at a time to see Fr. Seraphim.

Everyone thought it was to be a final farewell. All knew that having run the race as a prize athlete, Fr. Seraphim was ready to say, together with St. Paul: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). But while there was life there was



hope. We sinners were not ready to relinquish him to the other world. And we prayed for a miracle.

Having driven all night, Archbishop Anthony arrived at the hospital where he and Fr. Herman read the prayers for the departure of the soul. It was close to 2 A.M. Those at Fr. Seraphim's bedside did not want to leave. And then something unprecedented happened. Perhaps it was the compassion of the Mother of God which opened the doors. People began to gather in Fr. Seraphim's room—not three or four, but at least 20 surrounded his bed, and for the next several hours they sang for Fr. Seraphim to hear perhaps for the last time the beautiful Dormition stichera: "O ye apostles from afar, being now gathered together..." Then the entire Paschal Canon was sung. Many sang through their tears. Fr. Seraphim was breathing through a respirator and could not speak. But he was conscious, and when he heard the singing of one of his favorite hymns, "Noble Joseph," he began to cry. It was hard to look upon Fr. Seraphim's sufferings, but it was harder still to tear oneself away from his bedside. Finally, however, the nurses asked everyone to leave. No one knew that this was only the beginning of a vigil that was to last another five days and nights.

Among us was a catechuman, a young man who had asked Fr. Seraphim to baptize him on the feast of Dormition. Knowing the spiritual strength in the grace of this Mystery, Fr. Herman decided to proceed with the Baptism, hoping that through this act which was so pleasing to God, Fr. Seraphim would also be strengthened. In the company of four others, Fr. Herman left for the Monastery, having promised Fr. Seraphim that he would serve Liturgy for him there that day. The creek beyond the monastery sparkled in the sun. As the newly-enlightened John Damascene was clothed in the white robe of righteousness, a beam of joy pierced the veil of grief which hung heavy over everyone's heart. Exhausted by the all-night vigil at the hospital, the long drive to the monastery and the long service, an attempt was made to rest. But anxiety overcame sleep. Was Fr. Seraphim still alive? That afternoon at the monastery there were tearful entreaties before the icon of the Mother of God, "Quick-Hearer." On Mt. Athos the monks were also praying before this icon for Fr. Seraphim's recovery. Before leaving for Redding, a phone-call to the hospital—always made with a pounding heart—relieved everyone with the news that Fr. Seraphim's condition had slightly improved.

That evening there were still more people at the hospital. And a greater feeling of hope, even

though Fr. Seraphim was still given only a ten percent chance of recovery.

During the very early hours of the morning, the night-shift nurses kindly permitted prolonged visits. Those who had the opportunity to spend several hours at this time praying or reading the Gospel at Fr. Seraphim's bedside will never forget this intense and very sobering experience. It was a time to think about death which was hovering very close, and about the meaning of suffering for Christ, Utterly helpless, tied to the bed to avoid danger from possible seizures, wires from monitoring devices crossing his chest, his arms punctured with tube and breathing with the help of a respirator Fr. Seraphim looked like the image of one crucified; truly, we were witnessing a martyrdom. So often he had spoken about suffering and the benefit it had upon the Christian soul. He had such compassion and admiration for the suffering Orthodox behind the Iron Curtain. Perhaps God was allowing him to co-suffer with them. The Scripture passage came to mind: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Cor. 4:17).

The Sunday Liturgy in Redding was followed that evening by a service of Holy Unction. Each one felt as though his other sin were at least partially responsible for Fr. Seraphim's illness. Everyone therefore took part in the service of Unction, being anointed unto the healing of soul and body, repenting and fervently praying during the service, "Hear us, O God!" Afterwards, Fr. Herman went to the hospital to anoint Fr. Seraphim.

For all those close to Fr. Seraphim, it was a very intense and exhausting experience—emotionally, physically, and spiritually. The phone in the ICU waiting room began to ring constantly with calls from people all over the country asking about Fr. Seraphim—and praying. Here, and even abroad, fervent petitions were directed to the throne of God, imploring Him to spare Fr. Seraphim, not for His sake, for he had long since prepared himself for this hour, but for those of us who needed his guidance for the salvation of our souls. A man of such rare spiritual stature, lamp of true wisdom in this age of spiritual darkness and confusion... Surely God would not deprive us so soon of such a brightly shining light? The fields white with harvest in which Fr. Seraphim had labored so zealously... Who could replace him? His sermons, so simple yet piercing the heart, who would speak them? The many profound and inspiring articles and books he had written, guiding souls along the "royal path," ... who would be able to take up his

pen? How we needed him! But we had to remind ourselves that God's ways are not our ways, and we had to prepare ourselves to accept His will.

The hours passed slowly. Each telephone call, each visit from the doctors or nurses—we hoped for the best, and feared the worst. The waiting room became a prayer room, with one akathist or canon following another. The Gospel was read by turns, all four books, and again. It was such a time of intense and prolonged prayer that few of us had ever experienced before.

Tuesday morning Fr. Seraphim's condition again became very critical; phone calls were made to ask for increased prayer. That afternoon Abbot Chrysostomos and Hieromonk Auxentius arrived from St. Gregory Palamas Monastery in Ohio. Soon afterwards Bishop Nektary of Seattle also arrived to keep watch over his spiritual son whom he had ordained only 5 years ago. That night a midnight Liturgy was held in the hospital chapel, a room on the same floor as the Intensive Care Unit; it had a low ceiling and no windows which gave it a catacomb feeling. This was heightened by the intensity of the situation and the fervent prayers, united in spirit and purpose. Just as he had every day that week, Fr. Seraphim received Holy Communion and appeared to be more at peace.

That night a dying young boy had been brought into the Intensive Care Unit. His mother was weeping uncontrollably. When Fr. Herman approached her the next morning to comfort her, he asked if she would like her son to be baptized. Receiving an affirmative reply, Fr. Herman lost no time in baptizing the dying boy, Christopher. It was none too soon. Late that afternoon, it pleased the Lord to take his soul, pure and clean from the waters of Baptism. All felt that this was already a fruit of Fr. Seraphim's sufferings.

Wednesday afternoon the wonder-working icon of the Mother of God, "Unexpected Joy," was brought from San Francisco. It was immediately carried in to Fr. Seraphim. Throughout the day those present prayed before it, and sensed that truly, the Mother of God was keeping a close watch over Fr. Seraphim and that his sufferings were not in vain.

It was, after all, still the period of Dormition. Liturgy was again served at midnight in the hospital chapel and Fr. Seraphim received Holy Communion at 3 A.M. on Thursday morning. The icon remained in the hospital where people were still keeping vigil and periodically taking the icon into Fr. Seraphim whenever visitors were permitted.

But this vigil was not to last much longer. At about 10:30 the doctors announced that there was very little hope left, there was nothing more they could do. And within minutes, the vigil over the dying had ended, and a new life for Fr. Seraphim had begun. So it was pleasing to God. He had passed from death to life, from earth to heaven where the choirs of the righteous shine like the stars in the glory of Transfiguration.

Of the minutes and hours that followed, Abbot Chrysostomos has written:

"I went with Father Herman into the hospital room to help prepare the body, immediately after the death of this holy man. The room was now filled with love, with an inner spiritual fragrance, and with a sorrowful joy. From that moment on, no one who had not loved the man ever touched his body. And thus the fruits of his suffering, the victory of his struggle with whatever evil it was that he chose to do battle, became perfectly united with those around him. His unembalmed body we carefully and lovingly dressed. And despite efforts to bind his jaw, his face naturally fell into a quiet smile of unmistakable heavenly joy. His body never stiffened, nor did decay of any kind set in. The skin remained soft and the body seemed to be one of a sleeping child. A scientist from the University of California at Berkeley correctly described the body when he commented, "He looks precisely like a relic."

"The death of Father Seraphim produced a spiritual phenomenon untold of in our times. Lying in state in a crude wooden coffin in the humble monastery church, not only did the body remain soft and lifelike in the summer heat, but so comforting was his face that one could not bear to cover it, in the traditional monastic way. Even children could hardly move away from the coffin, since the body brought such internal peace and suggested such love. Everyone was aware that, in our times, among us, a holy man had left in his body a phenomenon that challenges science and our hearts. There was a universally expressed feeling among those present that we were privileged witnesses to a manifestation of God's Grace.

"The funeral for Father Seraphim, officiated over by Archbishop Anthony of Western America and San Francisco, and by Bishop Nektary of Seattle, produced even greater fruits. Over Fr. Seraphim's coffin two novices were tonsured: rassophore monks; Deacon Vladimir Anderson from the St. John the Almsgiver Mission in Willit was ordained priest; and Reader Lawrence from the Etna Mission was ordained to the diaconate. Father Seraphim's

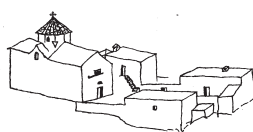
victory over an inexplicable evil with which he had struggled for his life had blossomed into a flower of overflowing love—a victory upon victory. And the gentleness with which he became victorious is perhaps best expressed by the family of deer which we, looking out the altar window during the singing of the Creed in the funeral Liturgy, saw gathered around his grave.

The burial of this holy man took place amidst great personal grief, for his loss was unthinkable

to all who loved him. But this grief was overcome, washed away, and transformed by a joy that one could only compare to that of Pascha. And indeed, several times during the burial the Paschal Troparion was spontaneously sung. What all of this means for us Orthodox in America, one can only vaguely understand from the astounding phenomenon which I have described. But without doubt, the death of Father Seraphim will benefit us as greatly now as his tremendous witness has during his years on earth."



Why is it necessary to listen to the Church and not listen to a man who thinks against the Church, even though he might be called the greatest thinker? Because the Church was founded by the Lord Jesus Christ, and is guided by the inspiration of the Spirit of God; because the Church represents the realm of the Holy, a grove of cultivated fruit trees. If someone rises up against the realm of the Holy, it means that he is unholy. Why then listen to him? "The Church is an enclosure," says the all-wise John Chrysostom. "If you are within, the wolf does not enter; but if you leave, the beasts will seize you. Do not distance yourself from the Church; there is nothing mightier than the Church. The Church is your hope. The Church is your salvation. The Church is higher than the heavens. The Church is harder than stone. The Church is wider than the world. The Church never grows old but always renews itself."



Fr. Alexey Young

HIEROMONK SERAPHIM OF PLATINA

—A MIGHTY PEN IS STILLED—

Orthodox America, Issue 22, Vol III, No. 2, August-September, 1982

DURING HIS LIFETIME, Hieromonk Seraphim Rose was known personally by only a few hundred people—those he knew in San Francisco before the Brotherhood of St. Herman moved to its remote, forested mountaintop, those who made the long and sometimes difficult pilgrimage to the Monastery, and the others he served in our mission territory. However, many thousands knew him through his books and articles, a torrent which poured from his pen in both English and Russian during the last 19 years.

These writings may be divided into two major categories—translations, and theological commentary; but before discussing them it is necessary to understand something of the spirit that inspired them.

Little children, it is the last hour. (1 John 2:18)

Although Fr. Seraphim put his mind, heart and soul into everything he wrote, a lecture he gave at the St. Herman Winter Pilgrimage at Holy Trinity Monastery in New York in 1979 (published as “Orthodoxy in the USA” in *Orthodox Word*, #91, 1980) expressed the dominant concern of all his work: “How do we remain Orthodox and develop our Orthodoxy against the spirit of worldliness that attacks us on all sides?” He feared that “Orthodoxy in America, if left to itself, would simply turn into an ‘Eastern-rite Protestantism’—that is, it would retain some of the externals of Orthodoxy, but inwardly would be scarcely different from worldly Protestantism.”

How do we combat the influence of worldliness in our attempt to follow Christ? “By fighting an INWARD SPIRITUAL BATTLE against worldliness (Orthodoxy) is something first of all of the heart, not just the mind, *something living and warm, not abstract and cold* A person who takes Orthodoxy seriously and begins to really work on understanding it with his heart and changing himself has at least a little of a quality we might call *the fragrance of true Christianity* This kind of Orthodoxy cannot be acquired overnight; it requires suffering, experience, testing. But first of all it requires RESOLVE.”

He himself recognized this kind of “resolve” in the lives of the saints; he believed that “a touchstone of true Orthodoxy is the love for Christ’s saints,” and so he translated numerous such lives in order that English-speaking readers might be as inspired by them as he was. Notable among his labors in this regard is *The Northern Thebaid*, a magnificent collection of the lives of saints of the Russian north. Fr. Seraphim also translated St. Gregory of Tours’ *Vita Patrum*, making available for the first time in English the little known Lives of Saints of 5th and 6th century Gaul. Many of these have already appeared in *The Orthodox Word* and, with God’s help, the entire collection will soon be ready to be published as a book.

Another group of saints, which are for us perhaps the most powerful examples today of genuine Christianity born of suffering, is Russia’s New Martyrs. The monastery’s magnum opus (650

pages), *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, is largely based on material translated and edited by Fr. Seraphim who was always very inspired by the fervent Orthodoxy of the persecuted Church behind the Iron Curtain. At the time of Fr. Seraphim's death the printing of this book had just been completed, and it will soon be available.

In his concern for genuine Orthodoxy, Fr. Seraphim stressed the importance of being "in tune" with the Holy Fathers. A few years ago the monastery published a very significant book, Paisius Velichkovsky, which is a key to our link with the Holy Fathers. More than hagiography, it describes the spiritual thirst for practical guidance which, Fr. Seraphim often said, should also be our motivation in reading the Holy Fathers. For this reason he was particularly anxious to make available the writings of the more "modern" Holy Fathers. Just days before he went to the hospital, he completed the last installment of his translation of the first part of Bishop Theophan's book, *The Path to Salvation*, which will also be available soon as a short book. Another series which Fr. Seraphim had worked on is called "*Our Living Links with The Holy Fathers*"—accounts of contemporary Orthodox writers and leaders who may be called the "spiritual heroes" of today.

Fr. Seraphim also translated and wrote articles on the earlier Fathers of the Church, notably St. Symeon the New Theologian (published by the Brotherhood under the title *The Sin of Adam*), Blessed Augustine, and others. His greatest contribution, however, in making Orthodox theological texts available in English, is his translation of Fr. Michael Pomazansky's book, *Dogmatic Theology*. Fr. Seraphim regarded this as a masterpiece; it is thorough without being academic and will be an indispensable explanation of the Orthodox Faith. By God's Providence, Fr. Seraphim made the final corrections over the summer and it only remains for it to be printed.

He was also aware of the need for Orthodox commentaries on Scripture. Already his translation of Archbishop Averky's commentary on the Apocalypse is now being serialized in *The Orthodox Word*. It is hoped that Fr. Seraphim's series of lectures on the books of Daniel and Genesis which he delivered at the St. Herman Summer Pilgrimages will also be made available.

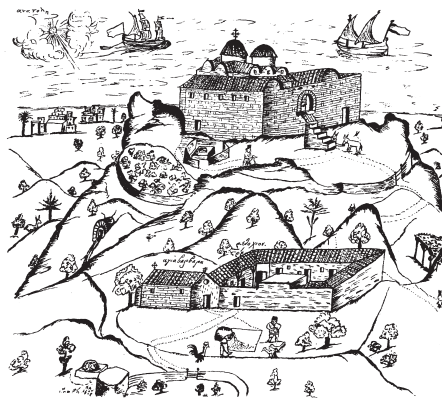
His lectures on Genesis came as a result of research in preparation for a book on the Orthodox view of creation. This too, God willing, will be printed in the near future.

In response to urgent inquiries from spiritual children all over the world, Fr. Seraphim authored two books of particular importance to our times, *Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future*, and *The Soul After Death*. The first of these is a tremendous collection of essays which examine the whole modern phenomenon of anti-Christianity—the proliferation of Eastern religions and the spirit of the times which paved the way for their widespread acceptance. This book is a feast for the intellect as well as the soul, thought-provoking, at times frightening, always apocalyptic, inspired by this line from Scripture: "Little children, it is the last hour" (I John 2:18).

The Soul After Death was written at the request of many in the Church, including some among the clergy and hierarchy. Who wished to see a straight-forward presentation of the Church's traditional teaching concerning what happens after death. Fr. Seraphim also included in this work a fascinating Orthodox interpretation of modern "after-death," "out of-body," and occult and psychic experiences. Both scholarly and sobering, this book has answered the questions of many, even among non-Orthodox, who have been searching for true Christian teaching concerning this subject.

These last two books have been "bestsellers" in Orthodox circles and are now out of print. There is an urgent need to reprint them now, for they are not only timely, but *timeless*. There is clearly an equally pressing need to make available his other writings. The time has come for all those^{oo} that have been nourished by Fr. Seraphim's writings throughout the years to step forward and help us to print these books. Doing so will ensure the continuation of his mighty work, and thus aid the mission of true Orthodoxy in the English language.

In this, the eighth decade of the second millennium after Christ, Orthodoxy has lost a powerful voice. But that loss is not irrevocable, for Fr. Seraphim can still, reach many hearts and souls as long as his writings continue to be printed. Please, help us in this holy labor!





Helene Kontzevitch

HIEROMONK SERAPHIM OF PLATINA CONFESSOR OF TRUE ORTHODOXY

Orthodox America, Issue 22, Vol III, No. 2, August-September, 1982

JUST BEFORE AWAKENING on the morning of September 2, 1982, when Fr. Seraphim was dying, I saw a dream. I was in the company of a priest unknown to me, who was reprimanding me for my sins. He told me I must never take offense at anyone. Together we entered a large, palatial hall. At the end of this hall a man was standing on a raised platform and singing. It was difficult to see him well because of the distance. In a most beautiful voice, he was singing the Magnification: "My soul doth magnify the Lord..." I said, "I don't hear well." The priest urged me to go closer and I took several steps forward. Then I began very clearly to hear the singing. The singer was a tenor with a voice like Fr. Seraphim's whose singing I had heard years ago in the San Francisco Cathedral. That was in the early 60's. Standing in the cliros, he alone sang the entire Matins service from beginning to end. Never in my life had I heard more prayerful singing. My soul was uplifted to the heights Now in my dream, I heard that same incomparable singing. It was the same voice, but it sounded like that of an angel, a dweller of paradise. This was heavenly, unearthly singing.

Waking up, I understood that there was no hope for Fr. Seraphim's recovery.

Having the greatest admiration for the newly-reposed Fr. Seraphim, and valuing highly his achievements before God, I would like to write a few words about an attribute of his which is most dear and close to my heart. This is his faithfulness to genuine Orthodoxy. He did not have the slightest divergence with the teaching of the Church; he did not hold to any personal opinions. My late husband, Ivan M. Kontzevitch, was the same, having several university degrees and, towards the end of his life completing theological academy. It never entered his mind to sin against the teachings of the Church.

The teaching of the Orthodox Church is not a product of the minds or the deliberations of the great Fathers of the Church. The Holy Spirit Himself inspired them with this teaching. It is for this reason that Orthodoxy is unshakable. Every offense against the Holy Spirit is an unforgivable sin (Matt. 12:31, 32). Faithfulness to Orthodoxy in our difficult and troubled times is of great value. Fr. Seraphim was a burning and illuminating lamp. He left us his light in his writings. Glory to God for all things.



Minutes of the Meeting of the Bishops' Council
of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

THE CANONIZATION OF FATHER SERAPHIM ROSE

BY

METROPOLITAN AGAFANGEL OF THE
RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH ABROAD



November 6/19, 2024

The Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, with the rights of the Synod of Bishops, opened with the singing of the prayer "O Heavenly King" on November 6/19, 2024, at 3:00 PM at the Synodal Representation in Ukraine, Odessa, Mykhailovska Square, 1.

Present:

His Eminence Agafangel, Metropolitan of New York and Eastern America, First Hierarch and Chairman of the Synod of Bishops of ROCOR;
The Right Reverend George (Secretary), Archbishop of Kishinev and Moldavia;
The Right Reverend Alexis, Bishop of Ceadâr-Lunga.

Also participating in the meetings via Skype were the following bishops:

The Right Reverend Gregory, Archbishop of São Paulo and South America;
The Right Reverend John, Archbishop of Buinsk and the Volga Region;

The Right Reverend Cyril, Bishop of Voronezh and South Russia;

The Right Reverend Nikon, Bishop of Ishim and Siberia;

The Right Reverend Anastasius, Bishop of Vladivostok and the Far East;

The Right Reverend John, Bishop of Melbourne and Australia;

The Right Reverend Ambrose, Bishop of Kolomna and Shchyurovo;

The Right Reverend Philaret, Bishop of Ferapontovo.

Journal No. 1

Heard: The Chairman on the agenda.

Resolved: To approve the agenda of the Bishops' Council meeting with extended rights in the following form:

1. Information on the preparation for the glorification of Hieromonk Seraphim (Rose) in the rank of the venerable.

2. Resolution on the location and date of the glorification of Hieromonk Seraphim.

Seraphim on the feast day of the Archangel Michael and the Other Heavenly Bodiless Powers, November 8/21, 2024.

Journal No. 2

Heard: Information from the Chairman on the preparation for the glorification of Hieromonk Seraphim in the rank of the venerable.

Resolved: To approve the text of the service and the icon for the Venerable Seraphim.

Resolved: To perform the glorification of Hieromonk Seraphim of Platina in the rank of the venerable. The location for the glorification shall be the Synodal Representation of ROCOR in Odessa. The date for the glorification is set for the feast day of the Archangel Michael and the Other Heavenly Bodiless Powers, November 8/21, 2024.

Journal No. 3

Heard: The Chairman's report on the preparation of the Synodal Representation of ROCOR in Odessa for the glorification of Hieromonk

Chairman:	†Metropolitan Agafangel
Secretary:	†Archbishop George
Assistant Secretary:	† Bishop Alexis



How do you respond to those who say that Christ the Miracle-worker cannot fit into our logic? Simply reply: Fit yourself into His logic. In His logic, all eternity fits and all the nobleness of time--and so, if you wish, a place will be found even for you. If a barrel cannot fit into a thimble, you can fit a thimble into a barrel. Blessed Clement of Alexandria says: "Philosophers are children until they become men through Christ. For truth is never merely thinking."

Christ came to correct man and, therefore, man's logic. He is our Logos and our Logic. That is why we must direct our reason toward Him and not Him toward our reason. He is the One Who corrects our reason. The sun is not regulated according to our clock, but our clock is regulated according to the sun.



Hieromonk Seraphim Rose

ORTHODOXY AND THE RELIGION OF THE FUTURE

How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life: and few there are that find it! Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them... Not everyone that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven: but he that doth the will of My Father Who is in heaven, he shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven. Many will say to Me in that day: Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and cast out devils in Thy name, and done many miracles in Thy name? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity. Every one therefore that heareth these My words, and doth them, shall be likened to a wise man that built his house upon a rock.

Matt. 7:14–16, 21–14

PREFACE

The Orthodox Word, Vol. 11, No. 1 (60) January-February 1975, p. 16–18

EVERY HERESY HAS its own “spirituality,” its own characteristic approach to the practical religious life. Thus, Roman Catholicism, until recently, had a clearly distinguishable piety of its own, bound up with the rosary, the “Sacred Heart,” the “Blessed Sacrament,” and the like; and a careful Orthodox observer could detect in such aspects of modern Latin “spirituality” the practical results of the theological errors of Rome. Fundamentalist Protestantism, too, has its own approach to prayer, its typical hymns, its approach to spiritual “revival”; and in all of these can be detected the application to religious life of its fundamental errors in Christian doctrine. The present book is about the “spirituality” of Ecumenism, the chief heresy of the 20th century.

Until recently it appeared that Ecumenism was such an artificial construct, such a syncretic conglomeration of heresies, that it had no spirituality

of its own; the “liturgical” agenda of Ecumenical gatherings both great and small appeared to be no more than an elaborate Protestant Sunday service.

But the very nature of the Ecumenist heresy—the belief that there is no one visible Church of Christ, that it is only now being formed—is such that it disposes the soul under its influence to certain spiritual attitudes which, in time, should produce a typical Ecumenist “piety” and “spirituality.” In our day this seems to be happening at last, as the Ecumenical attitude of religious “expectancy” and “searching” begins to be rewarded by the activity of a certain “spirit” which gives religious satisfaction to the barren souls of the Ecumenist wasteland and results in a characteristic “piety” which is no longer merely Protestant in tone.

This book was begun in 1971 with an examination of the latest “Ecumenical” fashion—the opening

of a “dialogue with non-Christian religions.” Four chapters on this subject were printed in *The Orthodox Word* in 1971 and 1972, reporting chiefly on the events of the late 1960s up to early 1972. The last of these chapters was a detailed discussion of the “charismatic revival” which had just then been taken up by several “Orthodox” priests in America, and this movement was described as a form of “Ecumenical spirituality” inclusive of religious experiences which are distinctly non-Christian in nature.

Especially this last chapter aroused a great deal of interest among Orthodox people, and it helped to persuade some not to take part in the “charismatic” movement. Others, who had already participated in “charismatic” meetings, left the movement and confirmed many of the conclusions of this article about it. Since then the “charismatic revival” in “Orthodox” parishes in America, judging from Fr. Eusebius Stephanou’s periodical *The Logos*, has entirely adopted the language and techniques of Protestant revivalism, and its un-Orthodox character has become clear to any serious observer. Despite the Protestant mentality of its promoters, however, the “charismatic revival” as a “spiritual” movement is definitely something more than Protestantism. The characterization of it in this article as a kind of “*Christian*” *medinmism*, which has been corroborated by a number of observers of it, links it to the new “Ecumenical spirituality” out of which is being born a new, non-Christian religion.

In the summer of 1974, one of the American monasteries of the Russian Church Outside of Russia was visited by a young man who had been directed to one of its monks by the “spirit” who constantly attended him. During his brief visit the story of this young man unfolded itself. He was from a conservative Protestant background which he found spiritually barren, and he had been opened up to “spiritual” experiences by his Pentecostalist grandmother: the moment he touched a Bible she had given him, he received “spiritual gifts”—most notably, he was attended by an invisible “spirit” who gave him precise instructions as to where to walk and drive; and he was able at will to hypnotize others and cause them to levitate (a talent which he playfully used to terrorize atheist acquaintances). Occasionally he would doubt that his “gifts” were from God, but these doubts were overcome when he reflected on the fact that his

spiritual “barrenness” had vanished, that his “spiritual rebirth” had been brought about by contact *with the Bible*, and that he seemed to be leading a very rich life of prayer and “spirituality.” Upon becoming acquainted with Orthodoxy at this monastery, and especially after reading the article on the “charismatic revival,” he admitted that here he found the first thorough and clear explanation of his “spiritual” experiences; most likely, he confessed, his “spirit” was an evil one. This realization, however, did not seem to touch his heart, and he left without being converted to Orthodoxy.

How many such “barren Christians” there are in the world today! The “charismatic revival” seems to have been devised just for them. Others, however, are less attached to “Christianity,” and their spiritual unrest leads them to Eastern religions. For this reason a fifth chapter has been added to this book, describing three kinds of “Christian meditation” which also produce “spiritual” results which are very impressive to those who come from the lukewarmness of modern “Christianity.”

Shortly after the publication of the article on the “charismatic revival,” *The Orthodox Word* received a letter from a respected Russian Orthodox ecclesiastical writer who is well versed in Orthodox theological and spiritual literature, saying: “What you have described here is the religion of the future, the religion of Antichrist.” More and more, as this and similar forms of counterfeit spirituality take hold even of nominal Orthodox Christians, one shudders to behold the deception into which spiritually unprepared Christians can fall. This book is a warning to them and to all trying to live a conscious Orthodox Christian life in a world possessed by unclean spirits. It is not an exhaustive treatment of this religion, which has not yet attained its final form, but rather a preliminary exploration of those spiritual tendencies which, it would indeed seem, are preparing the way for a true religion of anti-Christianity, a religion outwardly “Christian,” but centered upon a pagan “initiation” experience.

May this description of the increasingly evident and brazen activity of satan, the prince of darkness, among “Christians,” inspire True Orthodox Christians with the fear of losing God’s grace and turn them back to the pure sources of Christian life: the spiritual doctrine of the Holy Fathers of Orthodoxy!



Introduction

The Orthodox Word, Vol. 7, No. 3 (38) May-June 1971, p. 137-140

OURS IS A spiritually unbalanced age, when even many Orthodox Christians find themselves *tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive* (Eph. 4: 14). The time, indeed, seems to have come when men will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own *lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be inclined unto fables* (II Tim. 4: 3-4). One reads in bewilderment of the latest acts and pronouncements of the “ecumenical” madness. On the most sophisticated level, Orthodox theologians representing the American Standing Conference of Orthodox Bishops conduct a learned “dialogue” with Papists and issue a joint statement on the Eucharist (*Diaconia*, 1970, no. 1, p. 72), setting forth six points of “remarkable and fundamental agreement,” noting at the end some “serious differences ... which now prevent us from communicating in one another’s churches,” without even raising the one “difference” that is substantial and that renders such “dialogues” utterly futile: that the Eucharist within the Orthodox Church is a sacrament and grace-giving, and outside the Orthodox Church it is an empty ritual without grace, a blasphemy. Or again, Orthodox representatives gather with Papists and Protestants at St. Vladimir’s Seminary for an annual “Ecumenical Institute on Spirituality” without the slightest inkling of a realization that what can be “discussed” with heretics is most certainly not Orthodox spirituality, of which they can have had no experience, but only an academic caricature of it (St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly, 1969, no. 4, p. 225). Yet again, the third unofficial consultation of theologians of the Orthodox and Monophysite (“non-Chalcedonian”) Churches, meeting in Geneva in August, 1970, concludes that “on the essence of the Christological dogma our two traditions, despite 15 centuries of separation, continue to find themselves in full and profound agreement with the universal tradition of the one and indivisible Church,” the heresy which the Holy Fathers anathematized being a matter of “different terminology,” and it points the way for a “declaration of reconciliation” between the two bodies which will involve, for example, the abrogation of

all Orthodox statements against the Monophysite heretics (this would entail the rewriting of the Orthodox service books), although the Orthodox need not go so far as to recognize these heretics as saints, while allowing the Monophysites, however, to do so (*Epishepsis*, Sept. 29, 1970).

On the level of action, ecumenical activists take advantage of the fact that the intellectuals and theologians are irresolute and unrooted in Orthodox tradition, and use their very words concerning “fundamental agreement” on sacramental and dogmatic points as an excuse for flamboyant ecumenical acts, not excluding the giving of Holy Communion to heretics. And this state of confusion in turn gives an opportunity for ecumenical ideologists on the most popular level to issue empty if not idiotic pronouncements that reduce basic theological issues to the level of cheap comedy, as when Patriarch Athenagoras allows himself to say: “Does your wife ever ask you how much salt she should put in the food? Certainly not. She has the infallibility. Let the Pope have it too, if he wishes” (*Hellenic Chronicle*, April 9, 1970).

The informed and conscious Orthodox Christian may well ask: where will it all end? Is there no limit to the betrayal, the denaturation, the self-liquidation of Orthodoxy?

It has not yet been too carefully observed where all this is leading, but logically the path is clear. The ideology behind ecumenism, which has inspired such ecumenistic acts and pronouncements as the above, is an already well-defined heresy: the Church of Christ does not exist, no one has the Truth, the Church is only now being built. But it takes little reflection to see that the self-liquidation of Orthodoxy, of the *Church of Christ*, is simultaneously the self-liquidation of Christianity itself; that if no one church is *the* Church of Christ, then the combination of all sects will not be the Church either, not in the sense in which Christ founded it. And if all “Christian” bodies are relative to each other, then all of them together are relative to other “religious” bodies, and “Christian” ecumenism can only end in a syncretic world religion.

This is indeed the undisguised aim of the masonic ideology which has inspired the Ecumenical Movement, and this ideology has now taken such possession of those who participate in the Ecumenical Movement, taking the place of Christianity in them, that “dialogue” and eventual union with the non-Christian religions have come to be the logical next step for today’s denatured Christianity. The following are a few of the many recent examples that could be given that point the way to an “ecumenical” future *outside of Christianity*.

1 On June 27, 1965, a “Convocation of Religion for World Peace” was held in San Francisco in connection with the 20th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations in that city. Before 10,000 spectators there were addresses on the “religious” foundations of world peace by Hindu, Buddhist, Moslem, Jewish, Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox representatives, and hymns of all faiths were sung by a 2000-voice “interfaith” choir.

2 The Greek Archdiocese of North and South America, in the official statement of its 19th Clergy-Laity Congress (Athens, July, 1968), declared: “We believe that the ecumenical movement, even though it is of Christian origin, must become a movement of all religions reaching towards each other.”

3 The “Temple of Understanding, Inc.,” an American foundation established in 1960 as a kind of “Association of United Religions” with the aim of “building the symbolic Temple in various parts of the world” (precisely in accord with the doctrine of Freemasonry), has held two “Summit Conferences.” At the first, in Calcutta in 1968, the Latin Trappist Thomas Merton (who died suddenly in Bangkok on the way back from this Conference) declared: “We are already a new unity. What we must regain is our original unity.” At the second, at Geneva in April, 1970, eighty representatives of ten world religions met to discuss such topics as “The Project of the Creation of a World Community of Religions”; the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, delivered an address calling on the heads of all religions to unite; and on April 2 an “unprecedented” supra-confessional prayer service took place in St. Peter’s Cathedral, described by the Protestant Pastor Babel as “a very great date in the history of religions,” at which “everyone prayed in his own language and according to the customs of the religion which he represented” and at which “the faithful of all religions were invited to coexist in the cult of the same God,” the service ending with the “Our Father” (*La Suisse*, April 3, 1970). No Orthodox

delegates were apparently present at this convocation, but Orthodox ecumenists were represented by Dr. Blake, with whom they pray at WCC meetings.

4 Early in 1970 the WCC sponsored a conference in Ajaltoun, Lebanon, between Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, and Moslems, and a follow-up conference of 23 WCC “theologians” in Zurich in June declared the need for “dialogue” with the non-Christian religions. At the meeting of the Central Committee of the WCC at Addis Ababa in January of this year, Metropolitan Georges Khodre of Beirut (Orthodox Church of Antioch) shocked even many Protestant delegates when he not merely called for “dialogue” with these religions, but left the Church of Christ far behind and trampled on 19 centuries of Christian tradition when he called on Christians to “investigate the authentically spiritual life of the unbaptized” and enrich their own experience with the “riches of a universal religious community” (Religious News Service), for “it is Christ alone who is received as light when grace visits a Brahman, a Buddhist, or a Moslem reading his own scriptures” (*Christian Century*, Feb. 10, 1971).

It is thus clear that the notion of a “dialogue” with non-Christian religions is “in the air,” has become a part of the intellectual fashion of the day; it seems to be indeed the next step/or ecumenism in its progress toward a universal religious syncretism. What is the meaning of this “dialogue” for those who wish to remain Orthodox Christians? What is the Orthodox answer to it? The following three articles are offered as an approach to these questions. The first, on the Near Eastern religions with which Christian ecumenists hope to unite on the basis of “monotheism,” approaches the subject theologically, inasmuch as the most fundamental divergence of these religions from Orthodox Christianity occurs precisely in their doctrine of God. The second and longest article, on the most powerful of the Eastern religions, Hinduism, approaches the subject both theologically and on the basis of a long personal experience which ended in the author’s conversion from Hinduism to Orthodox Christianity; it gives also an interesting appraisal of the meaning for *Hinduism* of the “dialogue with Christianity.” The third article is a personal account of the meeting of an Orthodox priest-monk with an Eastern miracle-worker—a direct confrontation of Christian and non-Christian “spirituality.” From these articles an answer will emerge to what should be the central concern of the ecumenists’ “dialogue” with the non-Christian religions: who is the “father,” the “god,” that attracts and promises to unite you to those who do not accept Christ, our God and Saviour?



Do we have the same god that non-Christians have?

By Father Basile Sakkas, Swiss Orthodox Mission of
St. Nectarios, Geneva

La Foi Transmise, April 5, 1970



The Orthodox Word, Vol. 7, No. 3 (38) May-June 1971, p. 140-144

"The Hebrew and Islamic peoples, and Christians ... these three expressions of an identical monotheism, speak with the most authentic and ancient, and even the boldest and most confident voices. Why should it not be possible that the name of the same God, instead of engendering irreconcilable opposition, should lead rather to mutual respect, understanding and peaceful coexistence? Should the reference to the same God, the same Father, without prejudice to theological discussion, not lead us rather one day to discover what is so evident, yet so difficult—that we are all sons of the same Father, and that, therefore, we are all brothers?"

Pope Paul VI, *La Croix*, Aug. 11, 1970

ON THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 1970, a great religious manifestation took place in Geneva. Within the framework of the Second Conference of the "Association of United Religions," the representatives of ten great religions were invited to gather in the Cathedral of Saint Peter. This "common prayer" was based on the following motivation: "The faithful of all these religions were invited to coexist in *the cult of the same God*!" Let us then see if this assertion is valid in the light of the Holy Scriptures.

In order better to explain the matter, we shall limit ourselves to the three religions that have historically followed each other in this order: Judaism, Christianity, Islam. These three religions lay claim, in fact, to a common origin: as worshippers of the God of Abraham. Thus it is a very widespread opinion that since we all lay claim to the posterity of Abraham (the Jews and Moslems according to the flesh, and Christians spiritually), we all have as God the God of Abraham and all three of us worship (each in his own way, naturally) *the same God*! And this same God constitutes in some fashion our point of unity and of "mutual understanding," and this invites us to a "fraternal relation," as the Grand Rabbi Dr. Safran emphasized, paraphrasing the Psalm: "Oh, how good it is to see brethren seated together..."

In this perspective it is evident that Jesus Christ, God and Man, the Son Co-eternal with the Father without Beginning, His Incarnation, His Cross, His Glorious Resurrection and His Second and Terrible Coming——become secondary details which cannot prevent us from "fraternizing" with those who consider Him as "a simple prophet" (according to the Koran) or as "the son of a prostitute" (according to certain Talmudic traditions)! Thus we would place Jesus of Nazareth and Mohammed on the same level. I do not know what Christian worthy of the name could admit this in his conscience.

One might say that in these three religions, passing over the past, one could agree that Jesus Christ is an extraordinary and exceptional being and that He was sent by God. But for us Christians, if Jesus Christ is not God, we cannot consider Him either as a "prophet" or as one "sent by God," but only as a great imposter without compare, having proclaimed Himself "Son of God," making Himself thus *equal* to God! (St. Mark 14: 61, 62.) According to this ecumenical solution on the supra-confessional level, the Trinitarian God of Christians would be the same thing as the monotheism of Judaism, of Islam, of the ancient heretic Sabellius, of the modern anti-Trinitarians, and of certain Illuminist sects. There would not be *Three Persons*

in a *Single Divinity*, but a single Person, unchanging for some, or successively changing masks (Father-Son-Spirit) for others! And nonetheless one would pretend that this was the “*same God*”.

Here some might naively propose: “Yet for the three religions there is a common point: all three confess *God the Father*! But according to the Holy Orthodox Faith, this is an absurdity. We confess always: ‘Glory to the Holy, Consubstantial, Life-giving and *Indivisible* Trinity.’ How could we separate the *Father* from the *Son* when Jesus Christ affirms *I am in the Father, and the Father in Me* (St. John 14: 11), and *I and my Father are One* (St. John 10:30); and St. John the Apostle, Evangelist, and Theologian, the Apostle of Love, clearly affirms: *Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father* (1 John 2: 23).

But even if all three of us call God Father: of whom is He really the Father? For the Jews and the Moslems He is the Father of men in the plane of *creation*; while for us Christians He is the *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* (II Cor. 1:3, etc.), and we become His sons in *Jesus Christ* by *adoption* (Eph. 1: 4, 5) in the plane of *redemption*. What resemblance is there, then, between the Divine Paternity in Christianity and in the other religions?

Others might say: ‘But all the same, Abraham worshipped the true God; and the Jews through Isaac and the Moslems through Hagar are the descendants of this true worshipper of God.’ Here one will have to make several things clear: Abraham worshipped God not at all in the form of the unipersonal monotheism of the others, but in the form of the Holy Trinity. We read in the Holy Scripture: *And the Lord appeared unto him at the Oaks of Mamre ... and he bowed himself toward the ground* (Gen. 18: 1,2). Under what form did Abraham worship God? Under the unipersonal form, or under the form of the Divine Tri-unity? We Orthodox Christians venerate this Old Testament manifestation of the Holy Trinity on the Day of Pentecost, when we adorn our churches with

boughs representing the ancient oaks, and when we venerate in their midst the icon of the Three Angels, just as our father Abraham venerated it! Carnal descent from Abraham can be of no use to us if we are not regenerated by the waters of Baptism in the Faith of Abraham. And the Faith of Abraham was the Faith in Jesus Christ, as the Lord Himself has said: *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it and was glad* (St. John 8: 56). Such also was the Faith of the Prophet-King David, who heard the Heavenly Father speaking to His Consubstantial Son: *The Lord said unto my Lord* (Ps. 109: 1; Acts 2: 34). Such was the Faith of the Three Youths in the fiery furnace when they were saved by the *Son of God* (Dan. 3: 25); and of the holy

Prophet Daniel, who had the Vision of the two natures of Jesus Christ in the Mystery of the Incarnation when the Son of Man came to the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7: 13). This is why the Lord, addressing the (biologically incontestable) posterity of Abraham, said. *If ye were the children of Abraham, ye would do the works of Abraham* (St. John 8: 39), and these “works” are to *believe on Him Whom God hath sent* (St. John 6:29).

Who then are the posterity of Abraham? The sons of Isaac according to the flesh, or the sons of Hagar the Egyptian? Is Isaac or Ishmael the posterity of Abraham? What does the Holy Scripture teach by the mouth of the divine Apostle? *Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed: which is Christ* (Gal. 3:16). *And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise* (Gal. 3: 29). It is then in Jesus Christ that Abraham became a *father of many nations* (Gen. 17: 5; Rom. 4: 17). After such promises and such certainties, what meaning does carnal descent from Abraham have? According to Holy Scripture, Isaac is considered as the *seed* or *posterity*, but only as the *image of Jesus Christ*. As opposed to Ishmael (the son of Hagar; Gen. 16: 1 ff), Isaac was born in the miraculous “freedom” of a sterile mother, in old age and against the laws of nature, similar to our Saviour, Who



was miraculously born of a Virgin. He climbed the hill of Moriah just as Jesus climbed Calvary, bearing on his shoulders the wood of sacrifice. An angel delivered Isaac from death, just as an angel rolled away the stone to show us that the tomb was empty, that the Risen One was no longer there. At the hour of prayer, Isaac met Rebecca in the plain and led her into the tent of his mother Sarah, just as Jesus shall meet His Church on the clouds in order to bring Her into the heavenly mansions, the New Jerusalem, the much-desired homeland.

No! We do not in the least have the same God that non-Christians have! The *sine qua non* for knowing the Father, is the Son: *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me* (St. John 14: 6, 9). Our God is a God Incarnate, *Whom we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have touched* (1 John 1:1). The immaterial became material for our salvation, as St. John Damascene says, and He has *revealed* Himself in us. But when did He reveal Himself among the present-day Jews and Moslems, so that we might suppose that they know God? If they have a knowledge of God outside of Jesus Christ, then Christ was incarnate, died, and rose in vain!

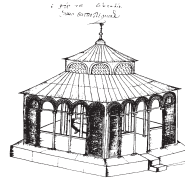
No, they do *not* know the Father. They have *conceptions* about the Father; but every conception about God is an *idol*, because a conception is the product of our imagination, a creation of a god in

our own image and likeness. For us Christians God is *inconceivable, incomprehensible, indescribable and immaterial*, as St. Basil the Great says. For our salvation He became (to the extent that we are united to Him) conceived, described, and material, by revelation in the Mystery of the Incarnation of His Son. *To Him be the Glory unto the ages of ages. Amen.* And this is why St. Cyprian of Carthage affirms that he who does not have the Church for Mother, does not have God for Father! ..

May God preserve us from the Apostasy and from the coming of Antichrist, the preliminary signs of which are multiplying from day to day. May He preserve us from the great affliction which even the elect would not be able to bear without the Grace of Him Who will cut short these days. And may He preserve us in the "small flock," the "remainder according to the election of Grace," so that we like Abraham might rejoice at the Light of His Face, by the prayers of the Most Holy Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, of all the heavenly hosts, the cloud of witnesses, prophets, martyrs . hierarchs, evangelists, and confessors who have been faithful unto death, who have shed their blood for Christ, who have begotten us by the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the waters of Baptism. We are their sons—weak, sinful, and unworthy, to be sure; but we will not stretch forth our hands toward a *strange god!* Amen.

NEXT ISSUE: II. HINDUISM'S ASSAULT UPON CHRISTIANITY.

Vanity over clothing is taking on a particular momentum in our time. He who has nothing else of which to be proud, becomes proud of his attire. Yet he who has something more costly than clothes of which to be proud, does not become proud. Just as gold is not found on the surface of the earth, so it is that the spiritual worth of a man does not show outwardly. It is said that a certain distinguished philosopher saw a young man who took pride in his clothing. He approached the young man and whispered in his ear: "The same fleece was previously worn by a ram; nevertheless, he was still a ram!" To be a Christian and to display pride in clothing is more insane than to be an emperor and to be proud of the dust under one's feet. While St. Arsenius wore clothes of gold in the royal court, no one called him Great. He was called Great only when he unselfishly gave himself over completely to God--and dressed in rags.



Hieromonk Seraphim Rose

“THE JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW”

THE MIRACULOUS ICONS OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

The Orthodox Word, 1965, Vol. 1, No. 1, January-February, p. 21–31

From henceforth all generations shall call Me blessed.

St. **Luke** 1:48

NO ASPECT OF Orthodox practice is more deeply rooted and more firmly established than the veneration of holy icons. One of the great feasts of the Church year, the Triumph of Orthodoxy celebrated on the first Sunday of Great Lent, was instituted on the occasion of the restoration of images after the period of iconoclasm, and the most important part of the work of the Seventh Ecumenical Council was the theological justification of icon-veneration. Many misconceptions about this veneration nonetheless continue to exist, particularly among non-Orthodox, and so a few words would not be out of place here on the source and nature of this veneration, before we turn more particularly to the icons of the Most Holy Mother of God.

The most extreme, and yet the most common, accusation levelled against the Orthodox veneration of icons, is that it is “idolatry” or “idol-worship,” that it (like the veneration of the relics of saints, with which it is closely connected) is a perversion of a spiritual in favor of a materialistic Christianity. Such a view is the result of a very basic misconception as to the nature of Christianity; it is rooted in a failure to understand the full meaning of the Christian Revelation.

The basis of icon veneration is to be found in the Incarnation of the Son of God, in the very source of Christian faith. The kontakion sung on the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy indicates this:

The illimitable Word of the Father accepted limitation by incarnation from Thee, O Mother of God; and He transformed our defiled image to its original state and transfused it with the Divine beauty... (Tone 8)

It is thus because God has taken human form and so restored this form to its original likeness to Himself, that it is proper for us to reverence images of our Lord, His Most Holy Mother, and the saints, in whom the Divine image has also been restored.

Icon-veneration is a consequence of the Incarnation; so too it illuminates for us the meaning of the Incarnation. Salvation has come to the world; God has given us means appropriate to our humble state whereby we may return to Him. The wisdom of the Church has been evident in her insistence on discipline of the body as well as of the soul; ours is a religion not of ideas and abstractions, but of practice and even of hard work. The body, which through its weakness would often lead us astray and ruin the best of intentions and the noblest of purposes,—it too must be chastened

and taught to please not itself but God That is one reason for our fasts, prostrations, for making the sign of the cross, and for the veneration of icons and relics.

Such are some of the principles that underlie the veneration of icons, and Orthodox practice is in perfect accord with them. No rightbelieving Orthodox person has ever been guilty of idolatry, of mistaking a piece of wood for God; nor has there ever been any confusion concerning the meaning of our reverence for the Mother of God and the saints. We worship, as St. John Damascene says, “not the material, but that which is represented; just as we do not venerate the material of the Gospels or of the Cross, but that which they represent.” Concerning the Mother of God, as the same Saint continues, “the honor which is given to Her is referred to Him Who was made incarnate of Her”; and regarding the saints, “the honor given to the best of one’s fellow-servants is a proof of one’s love for the common Lord.” ✙

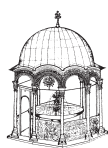
Every Orthodox icon that has been properly blessed is a means of grace; but beyond this a special place is reserved for icons that have become known for their miracles. The great majority of miraculous icons are of the Mother of God, and there is a special reason for this. As the chosen vessel of the Incarnation of the Son of God, the Mother of God occupies by right a central place in Christian worship. Further, as the kontakion for Orthodoxy Sunday implies, it was through birth from Her that the formless God assumed a form that could be represented. These theological facts are confirmed in Orthodox experience; for it is above all the Mother of God Who has aided and protected Orthodox people, revealing Her mercies at critical times for individuals and whole Christian communities, particularly through miracles wrought in connection with Her holy images.

The miracles to be described in this and future issues of *The Orthodox Word* will seem frankly incredible to many non-Orthodox, and we will doubtless be criticized for our simplicity in accepting them. There is one reason for our simplicity. We, unworthy as we are, and living as we do in the least Christian of all ages, have yet witnessed such miracles ourselves; and what we have seen with our own eyes we have no reason to doubt

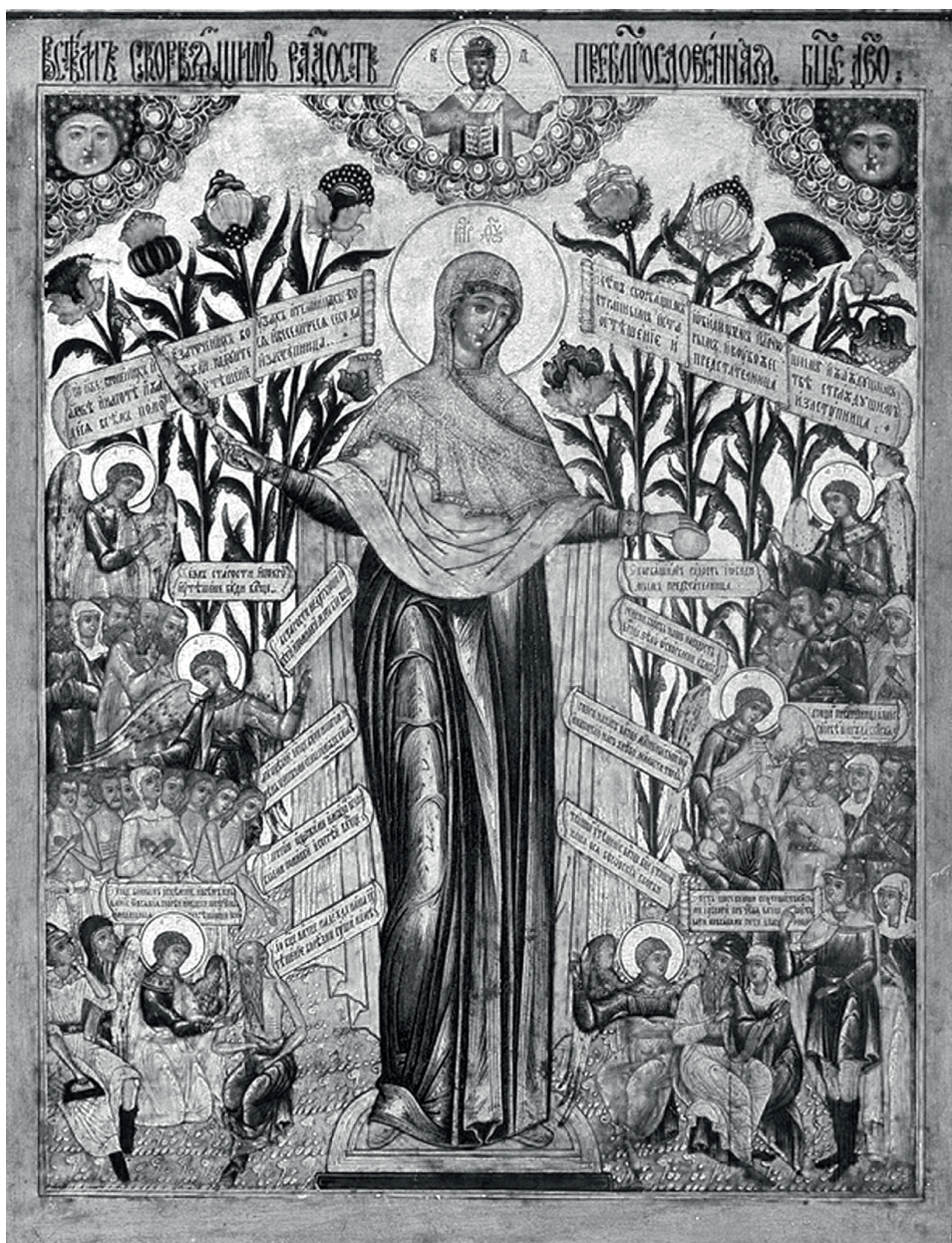
when recounted by the saints and fathers who have preceded us. In our own time icons have become miraculously brightened or renewed, or they have shed tears, and healings have occurred in their presence. Surely no one who has seen the tears streaming down the cheeks of the Mother of God in any of the recent weeping icons, and has known the tearful repentance which they evoke, can doubt that miracles occur or that they have a special meaning for us. The continued occurrence among us of such miracles is a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Orthodox Church. The skepticism and critical attitude of non-Orthodox in general towards miracles, ending in the attempt to explain them away, is perhaps due, more than to anything else, to lack of experience; for it is indeed true that outside the Orthodox Church miracles have become so rare as to seem freakish and phenomenal. For Orthodox believers miracles are still, if not commonplace, then at least something familiar and understandable; they are an important part of the normal spiritual life of the devout believer.

The abundance of Divine grace that has manifested itself through the intercession of the Most Holy Mother of God has given rise to a variety of icon-types, each one of which represents one instance or aspect of Her help and protection of sinful mankind. These icon-types are named either after the place of their revelation or miracles (such as the well-known images of Vladimir and Kazan), or after phrases, usually taken from an akathist or other service to the Mother of God, describing the function or meaning of the particular icon (such as the icon to be described below, “The Joy of All Who Sorrow”). The types are distinguished by such details as the position of the Child, the inclination of the head and direction of the glance of both Mother and Child, and gestures of the hands. Further, in addition to the basic types there are usually copies that differ from the original in small details; these copies often become known as being miraculous in their own right. If everything is considered, the study of the icons of the Mother of God is a science in itself, a science, as it might be called, of God’s grace. Our attempt in these short articles will be to give no more than an introduction to this science, with emphasis upon the history and practical meaning of each icon.

✙ *On the Orthodox Faith*, IV, 6.



“THE JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW”



THE ORIGIN of the Russian icon of the Mother of God known by this name is uncertain. It is not known whether it, like many other Russian icons, was derived from a Byzantine prototype; but in any case it existed quite early, already in Kievan Russia. What was apparently the oldest icon of this type was located near the Monastery of the Caves in Kiev (Kievo-Pechersky Lavra), in the church of the hospital founded in 1106 by St. Nikola Svyatosha (the Saintly), great-grandson of

Yaroslav the Wise. It is quite possible that the icon was placed there by the Saint himself.

An old tradition states that this icon was responsible for miraculous healings at a very early date. It is related that a gatekeeper several times saw a lady going into the hospital at night and noticed that after each such visit some patient would receive healing. Astonished by this, the gatekeeper asked the patients who this lady was. They replied that it

was someone unknown to them who, when asked her name, would answer, "I am the joy of those who sorrow." One night the gatekeeper followed the lady on one of her visits, which led to the cell of a monk who was fatally ill. There, on the wall over the bed of the dying monk, he saw the icon of the Mother of God and realized for the first time the true identity of the nocturnal visitor. This monk also was healed.

Many other miraculous icons of "The Joy of All Who Sorrow" were in existence before the eighteenth century, and the very name became as it were a magnet for those suffering all manner of afflictions. One of the oldest was located in a prison in the town of Vologda and occupied a place in every church procession in that town after the year 1522. Another icon in Tsarskoe Selo was noted for healing of the mentally ill; one in Pskov, for healing of diseased eyes; one in Tver, for miraculous help during an epidemic of cholera; one in Tobolsk, for protection of fishermen and merchants. In Perm there was a monastery dedicated to the icon.

The main feast-day of the icon, which is celebrated on October 24, was established in the year 1648 on the occasion of a miraculous healing by an icon in the city of Moscow. A sister of the Patriarch of Moscow Ioakim, Evfimia, suffered a deep wound in the side. Expecting to die, she nonetheless did not lose hope in Divine aid, and in answer to her fervent prayer to the Mother of God she heard a voice saying, "Evfimia, why do you not turn in your suffering to Her Who heals all?" "But where can I find such a healer?" replied Evfimia. "My image is in the church of the Transfiguration of My Son; it is called 'The Joy of All Who Sorrow'... Call a priest from this church with the image, and after he has served a moleben with the blessing of water, you will be healed. And then do not forget My mercy to you, and confess it for the glory of My name." All was done as the voice had indicated, and Evfimia was indeed healed on October 24, the date on which this icon has been commemorated since then.

The more recent popularity of "The Joy of All Who Sorrow" is owing to the miracles performed by another icon located just outside St. Petersburg in a chapel near a glass factory. During a thunderstorm on July 23, 1888, lightning struck the chapel and burned or singed everything inside, including the other icons, with the single exception of this icon. The icon slid to the floor from the shock, and the face of the Mother of God, which had darkened from age and soot, became suddenly bright. The nearby poor-box broke open at the same time

and twelve small coins from it became somehow attached to the face of the icon; these coins are always shown in subsequent copies of this particular icon.

News of the miraculous preservation and renewal of the icon quickly spread throughout the capital, and from early morning of the following day the burned chapel was surrounded by a multitude of people who marveled at this sign of Divine mercy. At noon that day the first moleben was served before the icon, and thereafter, as the news spread to the rest of Russia, ever larger crowds came to pray, and several miraculous healings occurred. The Emperor Alexander III, after himself coming to venerate the icon, donated a piece of land for the erection of a stone church dedicated to it; this church was consecrated in 1898. The icon is commemorated by the Church on the date of its renewal, July 23.

The various types of "The Joy of All Who Sorrow" possess in common certain basic characteristics. The Mother of God is always shown in full stature, sometimes with and sometimes without the Child in Her arms. Beneath Her are groups of people suffering various sorrows and afflictions, appealing for Her aid; above or among them are angels sent by the Mother of God to minister to their needs. Beyond these common characteristics the different types present a variety in the representation of details such as is seen in very few other icons of the Mother of God. This variety can partly be accounted for by the complexity of the icon itself; but, as we shall now see more precisely, it is most easily to be explained in terms of different renditions of an identical subject-matter.

The exceptionally fine icon illustrated here on page 25 is located in the cathedral church of San Francisco, which is dedicated precisely to The Joy of All Who Sorrow." It is executed in perfect traditional style and makes complete use of the symbolic language of traditional iconography, thus making it possible to express the full meaning of the icon with the greatest economy of means.

The Mother of God is shown here, as also in the St. Petersburg type, without the Child and with Her arms outspread in the manner of the celebrated icon of the "Protection" (*Pokrov*). In Her right hand the Mother of God holds a scepter, symbol of sovereignty; this symbol is present in only a few other of Her icons, most notably in the icon of the Reigning Mother of God." Some other types of "The Joy of All Who Sorrow" lack the scepter but express the same meaning through the use of a crown placed on or above the head of

the Mother of God. The meaning is clear: She is Queen of Heaven, enthroned in glory. Heaven is here indicated, not by naturalistic clouds as in certain modern versions of this icon, but by the gold background, which always symbolizes heaven, and by another, perhaps the most striking, feature of the icon: the flowers. These are obviously not earthly flowers; they are the blossoms of another world, of an entirely new creation—flowers of paradise. Even in such a detail as this, sacred iconography raises our minds above all things earthly and gives a fore glimpse of things as they will be in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Mother of God, though in paradise, is also near to men; and use of iconographic symbolism allows these two facts to be expressed simultaneously. Instead of being far removed from the world, above the clouds. She stands here in its midst, immediately accessible to all who seek Her. It is thus emphasized that the door to paradise is near and that at certain times—as in the case of miracles wrought by the intercession of the Mother of God—men are actually touched by Divine grace and glimpse, if only for a moment, paradise itself. On both sides sorrowing people appeal to the mercy of the Mother of God. The texts written on banners in Slavonic letters are the petitions of different groups of the afflicted that She may be for them the staff of old age, clothing and warmth of the naked, healing of the sick, joy of the sorrowing, intercessor of the offended, feeder of the hungry, companion of travelers. These and other petitions the Mother of God answers by sending angels to comfort and heal, Herself giving with the left hand heavenly nourishment in answer to the petition, “feed us with the bread of Thy mercy.” At the top of the icon to the left is the sun, and to the right the moon, a motif that appears sometimes in icons of the Crucifixion, but rarely in icons of the Mother of God; it symbolizes here perhaps the universality of Her sovereignty and of Her power of intercession. At the very top in the center stands the Saviour as Pantocrator, Ruler of All: He from Whom the Mother of God derives Her sovereignty.

The origin and history of this particular icon are unfortunately almost entirely unknown. It apparently remained in the Soviet Union until after the Second World War, when it somehow was brought to Paris. There it was purchased at an exhibition by an American, and it finally found its way into the window of an antique shop in San Francisco, where it was purchased by some members of the parish and presented as a gift to the cathedral church.

There are signs on the icon of once having been encased in a metal riza such as has long been used to protect and adorn valuable icons; of this it was apparently despoiled while still in the Soviet Union. It is obviously quite old, a fact corroborated by experts who examined it in San Francisco; a reasonable estimate of its date would place it in perhaps the 16th or 17th century. From these facts, and from the fineness of the icon itself, one may surmise that the icon was in fact one of the well-known images of this type that existed in pre-Revolutionary Russia; but nothing more definite can as yet be stated about it.

The cathedral church in San Francisco which is dedicated to this icon may itself be taken as a living example of its meaning. Formed in 1927 by a group of those faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia who wished to remain in the canonical Synod and reject the schism of the American Metropolia, it began in sorrow and tribulation as virtually the only loyal parish in America. From that time to this it has partaken of every tribulation of the suffering Russian people in exile, as well as others peculiar to itself devised by the devil for the division of the faithful. But through all its trials it has remained loyal to the canonical Russian Church abroad, and God has rewarded this faithfulness with a multitude of spiritual joys, not the least of which is the magnificent new cathedral, pictured on the cover of this issue of *The Orthodox Word*, which has been built for what has become the largest parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. It stands as a witness of the unbroken continuity of the Orthodox Faith first planted in the New World by Father Herman of Alaska.

The experience of this parish is repeated in the life of every Orthodox Christian who knows in his own experience the meaning of the words of our Saviour, “Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy” (St. John 16:20). This life has been given us for trial, and in trial there is inevitably tribulation and sorrow; but the goal of human life is the joy that awaits those who pass the trial. This joy we know already even in the small tribulations of our life, if we face them with Christian faith and with the aid of the Divine grace bestowed in the sacraments and through the intercession of the Mother of God and the saints; and this is for us a foretaste of the never-ending joy that awaits us in the next life. The very Lord of life was crucified and buried; but He rose from the dead and opened to all the door of eternal life. “In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (St. John 16:33).

In the Resurrection of our Saviour is the guarantee of our eternal joy; and in the intercession of His Most Holy Mother is the surest means of approach, outside the sacraments themselves, to this eternal joy. She is an ever-ready recourse in

our tribulations, a merciful bestower of blessings and joy even when there seems to be no hope. May the prayer of the troparion to Her icon be our own prayer: "Joy of all who sorrow, hasten, we pray, and save Thy slaves."

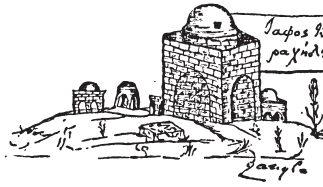
Note: The historical material on pp. 24-27 was taken from E. Poselyanin, *The Mother of God* (in Russian), St. Petersburg, n.d.

On submission to the will of God

"Thy will be done, in earth as in heaven"
Matthew 6:10

Blessed be John the Baptist, for he fulfilled the Gospel before the arrival of the Gospel! Going into the wilderness, he gave himself up completely to the will of God, both body and soul. The will of God was carried out in his body on earth as well as in the heaven of his soul. Neither hunger nor wild beasts did harm to his body throughout the many years that he spent in the wilderness. His soul was harmed neither by despair in loneliness nor by pride in heavenly visions. He sought neither bread nor knowledge from man. God granted him everything that was necessary for him, because he gave himself up completely to the will of God.

He directed his footsteps neither into the wilderness nor away from the wilderness. An invisible rudder from on high steered his life. For when it was necessary for him to depart from the wilderness and go out to meet the Lord, it is said: The word of God came unto John (Luke 3:2). Like an innocent youth, John spoke simply about his communication with the powers of heaven: And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon Whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God (John 1:33-34). How tenderly and simply he speaks about heavenly things! How terrifying like a lion he is when he speaks out against the injustice of men, against Herod and Herodias! The lamb and the lion dwell in him together. Heaven is as close to him as a mother is to her child. The will of God is as accessible and clear to him as it is to the angels in heaven. O Lord, most wise, direct the lives of us sinners in the wilderness of this life according to Thy will, as Thou didst direct the life of St. John the Baptist. To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.



Hermogen, Bishop of Pskof and Porkhof

ON THE HOLY SACRAMENTS OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

FROM LECTURES DELIVERED BY HERMOGEN BISHOP OF PSKOF AND PORKHOF

"Russian Orthodox American Messenger" - Vol. IV, No. 9, May 1900, p. 174-179



INTRODUCTION

I WILL NOT explain to you on what occasion and with what object these lectures on theological themes are to be given: the occasion is known to you, and so is the object. I shall merely say a few words on the subject and character of the lectures, themselves, which I would commend to your indulgent attention.

I have selected as my subject the doctrine of the Sacraments—for the following reasons: In the first place, it occupies a very prominent place in the domain of divinity and is more or less nearly connected with various branches of it, such as dogmatics, liturgies, church history. In the second place, the Sacraments impart to us, in the Apostle's words, *"the divine power unto life and godliness"* (II Peter, 1, 3), and we are in the enjoyment of them, or of some of them, through all the course of our lives, from birth unto death, from the cradle unto the grave; they are absolutely indispensable to us all, if we are to obtain life everlasting. And yet many, especially among laymen, have only vague and confused notions on the Sacraments—to such an extent that not a few seem to have forgotten their own proper appellation, and speak of them now as "rites," now as "ministrations." It is my desire, as far as I am able, to fill this gap, to supply this defective knowledge. I do not, indeed, promise

that my lectures shall lay before you the doctrine of the Sacraments in all its details, fulness and thoroughness: this would require of me too much leisure, which I cannot command, and would take too much of my hearers' time. But I am convinced that the latter, while they will find in them much that is familiar, will also hear much that, until now, was unknown to them. I hardly think that I shall have time in the course of the Holy Quadragesima, to expound to you the doctrine of *all* the Sacraments. I shall be satisfied with myself and most grateful to you, if, with God's help, I manage to treat of, and you to hear about, four or five Sacraments, *viz.* Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Matrimony and, possibly—Extreme Unction. But I must, as a preliminary, explain to you the doctrine of the Sacraments generally. Therefore I beg you to attend. Let us begin, with the help of God.

What then is a sacrament? wherein do sacraments differ from other sacred acts? and why are there seven Sacraments, neither more nor less? These are the questions which suggest themselves first when we think of the Sacraments.

Let us answer them in their order:

1 What is a sacrament? A sacrament, teacheth the Orthodox Church, is a sacred act by which under a visible form or sign, the Divine grace or virtue is invisibly imparted to man. Consequently, there are two aspects to every sacrament: the visible and the invisible. The prayers and all the rites which belong to the sacrament, are its visible aspect: every one of us can see and hear all that is done in the celebration of it. Looked at from this side, every sacrament is an object of study, of knowledge. The invisible aspect is the grace imparted by the sacrament. Looked at from this side, every sacrament is, in the true sense of the word, a “mystery” †, not to be comprehended by any of us, and therefore—an object of reverent faith, not of investigating knowledge. Take, as an instance, the Sacrament of Baptism: who shall make clear to us, how, through the immersion of the body into water, a human soul is purified, how a material substance can cleanse the spirit? Call to mind Jesus Christ’s conversation with Nicodemus on the necessity of regeneration by baptism in order to obtain the Kingdom of Heaven. The teacher here was not an ordinary teacher or even one of the wisest and most gifted. He was not merely a teacher—He was the Light born of Light, Which illumineth all men—He was the Way, the Truth and the Life—the Son of God Himself. Nor was Nicodemus an ordinary disciple—he was a prince and teacher in Israel. What more would you have? And yet, what happened? They talked together long; but the question was not solved: the mystery remained a mystery, and Nicodemus, after giving all his attention to the words of the Heavenly Teacher, kept repeating “*How can these things be?*” (John 3, 9). And what did the Savior then say to Nicodemus about the wind? “*The wind bloweth where It listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth*” (ib. 8). We must say the same about the grace in the Sacrament of Baptism: grace undoubtedly “bloweth” in the sacrament, but we “cannot tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth”. Really now—whence cometh it? Of course from God. But how? From God the Father, or from the Son, or from the Holy Ghost? or from all three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity, since they are, by their essence, indivisible? And if it cometh from all three Persons of the Trinity, what part, or what exact share does each person take in imparting the gift of grace? The more one thinks about it, the more incomprehensible the mystery becomes. Again—*whither goeth it?* (meaning grace.) Of course to the person who is the recipient of grace. *But how?* How does water become the vehicle of divine grace? How can a substance, even though not coarse, yet still material, having the body, but not penetrating it, cleanse and purify a human being’s spiritual nature, with its

intellect, its will, its feeling heart? Here again, the more one thinks of it, the more incomprehensible the mystery becomes. Or, take the Sacrament of the Eucharist. It is beyond a doubt that, under the semblance of bread and wine, we partake of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. But here again we are confronted by an incomprehensible mystery: in what manner, in this sacrament, does the essence of the bread become changed into the essence of the Lord’s Body, and the essence of the wine into the essence of the Lord’s Blood? and how is only the semblance of the wine and bread left for our eyes and taste, to enable us to receive Communion, since, owing to our human nature, we can not eat human flesh or drink human blood? When Christ said to the Jews: “*I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread which I will give is my flesh*”... (John 6, 51), they began to dispute noisily among themselves, saying “*How can this man give us his flesh to eat?*” (ib. 52). And what did Christ do? He did not answer their question “how can he?” because whatever He might have said to explain the mystery, it would certainly have still remained incomprehensible to them. He merely said: “*verily, verily I say unto you, except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life*” (ib. 53–54). And here again everything is to us mystery upon mystery incomprehensible. And we involuntarily think of the Blessed Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, how he one day sat by the sea and strove to solve the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity: how God can be one, and yet three. He thought and thought, pondered and brooded; but nothing grew clear in his brain—it was all impenetrable darkness. And as he sat there, a little boy, very fair to look upon, appeared quite near to him, and, picking up a shell, began to fill it with water from the sea, and to pour out the water upon the sand of the beach. “What art thou doing that for?” asked Augustine. —“I want” replied the child, to bale out the whole sea and pour it out upon the earth with this shell.”—“Foolish child!” exclaimed Augustine, “how thinkest thou to bale out the sea with this little shell? Thou wilt grow weary, expend all thy strength and break down, yet shall not the water in the sea grow less.” But the boy replied: “Sooner shall I bale out the sea with this little shell and pour out its waters upon the earth than thou, with thy small intellect, shalt fathom the great mystery: how God can be one, yet three?” He said and vanished. It was one of God’s angels, sent to bring the too curious Augustine to his senses.

We have, then, already formed some idea of the nature of the Sacraments. With this notion the notions of Christians of other confessions on the

† The Russian word for “sacrament” is one that literally signifies. “mystery.” (Translator’s note).

✠ Already St. Cyprian of Carthage described the Sacraments as vehicles of the life of spiritual grace.

same subject fully agree. The Eastern Christians—Armenians, Copts, etc.—almost all agree in this, and, of the Western Christians—the Roman Catholics. The others differ more or less from the Orthodox doctrine. Thus for instance, the Anglican Church teaches that the Sacraments are only testimonies and signs of grace, not vehicles of the same. The Baptists hold them to be mere symbolical rites, which only betoken a person's entrance into the Christian community and the union of its members among themselves.

2 In what do the Sacraments differ from other sacred acts? In my opinion three essential differences are to be noted:

a All the Sacraments were, beyond a doubt, instituted by Jesus Himself, and exert on us a saving force in virtue of His merits and death on the cross. But who instituted the other sacred acts, such as Te-Deums, Requiem services, processions, etc.—that we do not know with any certainty. True, these things too have existed from remote antiquity, but neither the Scriptures nor sacred tradition, nor history inform us clearly, whether Christ Himself instituted them, or His Apostles, or, later, holy fathers of the church.

b Each sacrament, as we know from the Catechism, has a special action of divine grace attached to it ✠. Thus to Baptism belongs the grace of spiritually regenerating man; to Penance that of remitting sins; to the Eucharist that of intimately uniting man with Jesus Christ Himself, etc., etc. In every sacrament there undoubtedly abideth a special grace, but no one can define in what exactly it consists. I will give you an illustration. You have received holy Baptism. I ask you: "What grace have you received through Baptism?" You answer without the least hesitation: "Baptism has given me a new life by grace." You have attended an evening service. I ask you: "What grace have you derived from the service?" You do not answer my question, because you do not know how to answer it.

c In each sacrament that particular grace is imparted to man which belongs to that particular Sacrament, if only the recipient be worthy: in Baptism you receive the grace of a new spiritual life—that and no other; in Confirmation you receive the grace of a force which develops and strengthens the spiritual life conferred by Baptism,—that and no other, etc., etc. But nothing of the kind can be said with absolute certainty of other sacred acts. Before departing on a long journey, I celebrate a special Te-Deum, that the Lord may bless my journey and help me to achieve the objects I have set to myself, and I hope that

my prayer will not be vain; otherwise, if I had not that hope, I should not celebrate the Te-Deum... But can I say with certainty: "my journey shall be in every way prosperous and I shall not encounter any difficulties, any unpleasant adventures, because of my having celebrated this Te-Deum? No, I can not. You, before sending your son to school, celebrate a Te-Deum, praying that the Lord may help him to be successful in his studies. This is, in itself, a praiseworthy beginning, and you may and must hope that the Lord will hear and fulfil your prayer—yours and the child's: if you did not, you would not have so prayed. But can you say with absolute certainty: "My little son will study well, because we had this Te-Deum sung?" No; of course you can not. The same thing is true of all other acts of worship, excepting only the Sacraments.

Of these there is the following remark to be added: the virtue of a sacrament does not depend on the faith of the recipient, nor on the merit of the celebrant. Should I, in receiving any one of the sacraments, disbelieve its virtue, it would take effect on me all the same, only it would serve not to my justification, but to my condemnation. The following occurrence is recorded of St. Gregory, Pope of Borne. Once, while he was celebrating the Liturgy and giving communion to the faithful, a woman approached him with the rest, but smiled as he uttered the words: "The handmaid of God partaketh of the precious and holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ." He asked her why she was smiling. She replied: "Holy Father, thou sayest that I partake of the Body of Christ? Yet I myself made this bread and brought it here, to be used at the Liturgy: how then can it be the Body of Christ?" St. Gregory only said to her: "If thou wishest to receive communion, do so; if not, stand aside." She was going to receive it, but could not. The Pontiff again asked: "Why dost thou not receive communion?" She replied: "Because I now see that this is indeed human flesh and I cannot partake of it." The Pontiff offered a silent prayer, and the woman then partook of the Body and Blood of Christ under the semblance of bread and wine. This is confirmed by the Apostle Paul, where he says: "*But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body*" (I Cor, 11, 28–29).

As regards the celebrant of the Sacraments, only two conditions are required in order that the latter may have their inherent virtue: 'that he be a legitimately ordained minister of the altar, not a pretender, nor under sentence of suspension, and that he celebrate the rite not after some manner

of his own invention, but exactly after the manner prescribed by the Church, even though he do not perform the act with due reverence. The reason of this is that he is not really the performer of the sacrament, but only the instrument of God in the performance of it. If I offer you a golden coin, there will be no change in the value of it, whether the hand on which I offer it be clean or soiled. If I lay in the earth a seed that has the vital principle in it, it will also not undergo any change, no matter what may be the condition of the hand with which I hold it. Man needs good tools in order that his work be well done. But God, the all-knowing and all-powerful, has no need of such tools. It goes without saying that the minister who celebrates a sacrament carelessly shall be made to answer for it heavily on the great Judgment Day, as it is said in the Scriptures: "*Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully*" (Jeremiah, 48, 10).



3 We Orthodox Christians

acknowledge seven sacraments, no more, no less. Although it is not explicitly said in the Scriptures that there are seven sacraments, that number is mentioned there, individually. Just so we find seven sacraments mentioned in the writings of the earliest Fathers of the Church. If they did not write expressly of seven sacraments, some of them, on special occasions, wrote on Baptism and the Eucharist, others on Confirmation and Penance, others again on Matrimony, and so forth †, so that, if we read through all their writings, we shall arrive at the clear and firm conviction, that the early Church recognized seven sacraments. And since the 4th century many of the Fathers and teachers of the Church wrote of the Sacraments expressly as being seven. Therefore we, Orthodox Christians, acknowledge the number seven as that of the sacraments, on the ground of the Scriptures and of sacred tradition. But why seven, neither more nor less? To this question, of course, only lie could give a direct and conclusive answer, Whose pleasure it was to institute these seven sacraments—Jesus Christ Himself; while our answers can be only hypothetical.

The best solution of the question would seem to be this: that seven sacraments were instituted because that number answers all our spiritual needs. Each

of us is a human being and a Christian. What then are the essential conditions of our existence, individually, as human beings? They are these: In order that a man may exist in the world, it is first of all necessary that he receive the gift of life, in other words—that he be born; for one who has not been born does not yet exist. But he is born. What is the next thing needed, in order that the life to which he is born may continue? Certain forces of nature are needed for that—sunlight, and warmth, and air, which are to develop and strengthen his organic life, come into being through birth: without sunlight and warmth the infant would freeze, while without

air it could not breathe, consequently would die immediately after birth. Further, it needs food and drink: without them it would starve to death. Here, then is a human being, born, and living through the enjoyment of sunlight and warmth, of air food and drink. But this life, from diverse causes, is subject to perturbations; the

child falls ill: for the restoration of its health physicians are needed, and medical appliances. We require the same essential conditions in our capacity of Christians. In order to be a Christian, a man must first of all receive a new spiritual life, cleansed from the original sin with which every man is born into the world—a new birth, a spiritual birth. This second birth is given him by the Sacrament of *Baptism*. But, after receiving through Baptism a new spiritual life, the Christian forthwith feels the need of a force of grace, capable of developing and strengthening this new spiritual life, conferred through baptism. This developing and strengthening force is imparted to the Christian by the Sacrament of *Confirmation*; it is, in a way, a sort of spiritual light and warmth, of spiritual air, like the material sunlight and air which develop and strengthen the infant organism immediately after birth. The Christian further needs spiritual nourishment, as the infant, after being born, needs, next to sunlight, material food and drink. This spiritual nourishment is provided for the Christian in the Sacrament of the *Eucharist*. In the course of his life the Christian unavoidably encounters various infirmities and diseases, both of body and soul. Against those he needs medical assistance: that is supplied by two Sacraments—the Sacrament of *Penance* and that of *Extreme Unction*. Further, it is

† Thus St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (3-d cent. A. D.), wrote on four of the Sacraments—Baptism, Confirmation, Penance and the Eucharist.

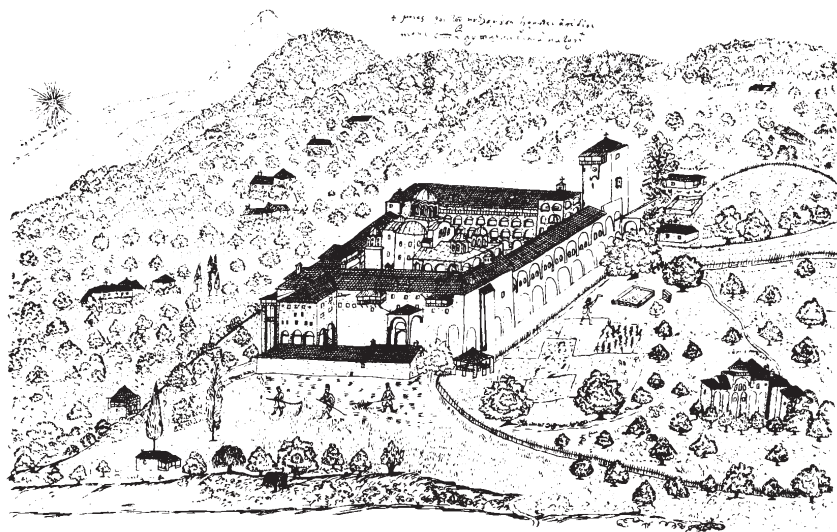
necessary that men, including Christians, should multiply upon the earth,—not as animals do, but with and by the blessing of God: “*Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth*”, the Lord said to our first parents when he created them. This blessing of God is conferred upon the Christian through the Sacrament of *Matrimony*. Lastly there is need of men having authority from God Himself to regenerate men spiritually, i. e. to baptize them, and impart to them the grace which is to develop their spiritual life and strengthen it with spiritual sustenance, to heal the sick, and invoke the blessing of God on them that enter the married state. Such authority is conferred through the Sacrament of *Orders*.

Thus the seven Sacraments completely satisfy all our spiritual needs; so that, should there be, let us

say, eight of them, we should not know what use to make of the eighth, to what special spiritual need to apply it: it would be superfluous. While, should there be fewer than seven, many of our spiritual needs would remain unsatisfied. Omit, for instance, Confirmation: the Christian would be in the position of a man deprived, after birth, of light, warmth, and air. Take away the Eucharist—and you condemn the Christian to death by starvation, etc. etc.

Four of the seven Sacraments are or may be administered repeatedly in the course of a Christian's life: they are Penance, the Eucharist, Matrimony (up to three times), and Extreme Unction. The other three—Baptism, Confirmation and Orders—cannot be repeated.

⇒ TO BE CONTINUED ⇐





F. A. Golder

FATHER HERMAN - ALASKA'S SAINT

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

The Orthodox Word, 1965, Vol. 1, No. 1, January-February, p. 3-16

*Blessed dweller of the northern wilds
and gracious intercessor for the whole worlds
teacher of the Orthodox Faith, good and most wonderful enlightener,
adornment of Alaska and joy of all America,
Holy Father Herman, pray that Christ, the King of Glory, may save our souls.*

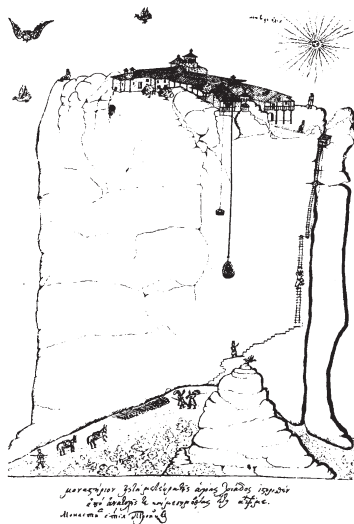
TROPARION, TONE 4

Though not yet canonized, Father Herman of Alaska, as his life and miracles attest, may already he justly called America's first Orthodox Saint. His relics are preserved today on Spruce Island. The following account of his life was the first to appear in English in America. It was written by an American expert on the North Pacific and was first printed early in this century in Pullman, Washington.

THE ALASKA TOURIST who visits Kodiak in the summer never forgets the beauty of the island, the arcanian village of St. Paul, the blue sea, the green hills, the grassy slopes, the flowery valleys, the babbling brooks, the plaintive note of the golden crowned sparrow. Kodiak is well worth remembering for other reasons: it is of historic importance, it is a sacred spot. The first Christian missionaries in the American Northwest landed on this island and the first Christian church in our North Pacific was built in this village. There is still another reason: for over forty years a man

of God, Father Herman, lived and labored among the people of Kodiak and the neighboring islands. They still revere his memory, treasure his sayings, glory in his deeds, and adore him as a saint. It is the purpose of this little book to tell the story of this holy man as it is told by the natives of Kodiak and by his brother monks.

Father Herman was born not far from Moscow in the year 1756; but neither the exact place of his birth nor his name before becoming a monk is known. It would seem that his parents were of the merchant class and



they gave him some educational advantages, enough to read the New Testament and the Lives of the Saints. At the age of sixteen he entered the Troitsky-Sergiev Monastery, but did not live in the monastery proper but in one of its isolated stations near the Gulf of Finland, where he was undisturbed in his devotions. While in this place he had reason to believe that the Holy Virgin had taken him under her special care. A sore broke out under his chin, causing him much suffering and slowly undermining his strength. In his sorrow he spent the whole night praying and weeping before the image of Our Lady. Towards the morning he wiped the picture with a cloth, which he then wrapped over the sore, and fell on the floor exhausted. In his sleep he saw the Virgin standing near him and felt her touching his swollen face. He woke with a start and found himself well; the sore was gone and only a slight scar was left to remind him of the miraculous cure.

In this deserted spot he lived five or six years and then entered the Valaam Monastery, situated on Valaam Island in Lake Ladoga. Father Herman was attracted by the solitude of Valaam, which during eight months of the year is ice-bound and during the other four months is reached only with difficulty. The monastery was far removed from the temptations of the world and was famed for its piety. Father Herman's attractive personality and kindly ways soon made him a favorite with the other monks, so much so that even at this day they speak of him as the holiest man that has ever gone from them. They point to the place named after him *Hermanova*, where he was wont to wander off and pray for days at a time until the brothers had to go and bring him back. They tell of his religious ardor, of his gentleness, and of his sweet tenor voice, which was like that of an angel. Father Herman had the soul of a poet and there was much about the monastery and the island that appealed to his sense of beauty: the flowery fields, the shady forests, the wild birds, the snow-clad trees, the ice-covered lake, the mighty wind and raging storm. It was one of his duties to catch the fish with which to feed the hungry multitudes who came to pray. On such occasions Father Herman would pull away from shore and, after casting his nets, sit and contemplate in secret silence his beloved Valaam, its white walls and green woods, golden domes and blue sky, picturesque chapels and emerald isles, holy shrines and towering cliffs. From afar he watched the procession of the pilgrim bands with banners flying and candles glimmering and listened to the sweet music and the chiming of the bells as they came floating through the balmy air and over the silvery sea. To the fisherman Valaam was Jerusalem the Golden.

*O, sweet and blessed country,
The home of God's elect.*

But more than his surroundings he loved his fellow monks, their simplicity, their humility, their guilelessness, their childlikeness. Their time was not spent in scholastic disputations and literary compositions, but in toiling in the fields and working in the shops, in feeding the hungry and praying with the dying. Years afterwards, when enduring the curses of Baranov and the sneers of his minions, Father Herman's mind fondly turned to the days of his young manhood, to his Valaam, to his brothers. In a letter written to the abbot in 1795, he says: "The frightful places of Siberia cannot destroy, the black forests cannot hide, the mighty rivers cannot efface, the stormy ocean cannot put out the warm affection that I have for my beloved Valaam. Often I close my eyes, and see you across the waters."

When in 1793 the Holy Synod decided to organize a Kodiak Mission and called for volunteers to go to America to preach the Gospel to the Aleuts, Father Herman was one of the first to offer himself and one of the first to be accepted. This was no ordinary undertaking, it was the first mission ever sent out by Russia across the sea. The men selected were the best the monastery had to offer, they were full of the spirit of the Apostles, and they were eager to give their lives to advance the Kingdom of God. They were eight in number: Archimandrite Joasaph the leader, monks Juvenaly, Macary, Afanasy, Joasaph, Herman, deacons Stephen and Nectary. These men were plain peasant and fisher folk of limited education and restricted outlook, but zealous in the faith and ardent in their devotions? ✠ They had never been far from their village homes and out-of-the-way monasteries, and the journey to the new field of labor was an important event in their lives. They set out from Moscow on January 22, 1794, and moved gradually across Siberia to Okhotsk where they took ship for Kodiak, reaching their destination on September 24 of that same year.

As soon as they walked ashore the leader called his followers together on a knoll to discuss plans for the work. It is inspiring to read the account of this first religious conference in the Northwest and to note with what eagerness the brothers contended among themselves for the most difficult and dangerous task. It is said that one of the monks, while walking along the beach saw an empty skiff into which he stepped and, lifting his hands to heaven, prayed that he might be guided to a place where he could be of most service. A wind came up and blew

✠ The information here is not quite correct. Rev. Hierodeacon Stephen, former officer, and Rev. Hieromonk Juvenaly, at one time a mining engineer, were not of such simple background as the author states. As for the Archimandrite Joasaph (before monasticism Ivan Ilyich Bolotoff), he was the son of a priest from the Kashensky region and was educated in Tver and Jaroslavl Seminaries. After completing his studies he taught for four years in the Ugliczky Theological School and in 1784 entered the monastic life. In 1793 he was appointed head of the Kodiak Mission as recommended by the Abbot of Valaam Monastery, Nazary, advisor to the first publication of the *Philokalia* in Russia. On April 10, 1805 Joasaph was consecrated bishop. He was the author of an extensive and systematic work published in 1805, describing life on Kodiak Island.

the skiff on Nuchek and there the monk preached salvation to the heathen.

The winter that followed their arrival was a busy one for Father Herman and the other missionaries, who went from village to village telling the people of the Saviour. On May 19, 1795 the Archimandrite wrote: The Lord be praised! We have baptized more than seven thousand Americans and have performed more than two thousand marriage ceremonies... We love them and they love us; they are good but poor. They are so willing to be baptized that they have destroyed and burned their idolatrous things. We were afraid that they were naked, but God be thanked they are not altogether without modesty. their bird-skin shirts come down sufficiently far in front. During the year 1795 Hieromonk Juvenaly baptized seven hundred natives on Nuchek and all the inhabitants of Cook Inlet. In the following summer he crossed over to the mainland and exhorted the people living along the shores of Iliamna Lake to give up their polygamous and heathenish practices and lead Christian lives. Many heeded his words and were baptized; but others, led by their shamans, sought to destroy him. When he had gone from their village they waylaid him and killed him. But as the murderers started back for their home Hieromonk Juvenaly rose from the dead and followed them. Once more they discharged their arrows into his bleeding body and once more he pursued them. This happened several times. In their desperation they hacked his body into small pieces and ran away, but as they glanced back they observed a column of smoke ascending heavenward from the mutilated body.

The work so auspiciously begun aroused much interest in Russia. The Holy Synod decided to enlarge the field of labor and to increase the force of workers. It called Archimandrite Ioasaph to Irkutsk to be consecrated bishop so that on his return he would train and ordain native priests who should go over the length and breadth of the Northwest to carry light to those who lived in darkness. This grand conception, promising so much for the glory of God, was never realized. The ship Phoenix the first boat built in Alaska, on which the bishop with his assistants, including Fathers Makary, Stephen, and others, was returning from Okhotsk to Kodiak in 1799, foundered

at sea with all on board. From this sad loss the mission never fully recovered. ✠

There were still four missionaries in America and under the guidance of Father Herman, they could have continued the work had they not been so bitterly opposed by the officers of the Russian American Company. It was the old fight between the missionary and the trader. The priests reproached Baranov and his associates for their licentious lives and for their brutal treatment of the islanders, and later brought the matter before the Holy Synod. Baranov neither forgot nor forgave this injury and he swore that he would be avenged on the informers. As soon as it became known that the bishop was lost, Baranov set about venting his wrath on Father Herman and his fellow workers. He was all-powerful, he was coarse, he was cruel. It used to be a common saying among the hunters of his day, that, "God is in Heaven, the Tsar is in Russia, Baranov is in America; let us, therefore, bow before Baranov." He drove the monks from the natives and unmercifully abused the natives if they went near the monks. By dragging one of their number to the church and threatening to hang him from the steeple, Baranov secured the keys to the building and kept it locked after that. He was determined to hound the missionaries from the island and out of his sight; and at the same time his friends in the capital were powerful enough to oppose the petitions of the poor men to be allowed to return to Russia. They were caught between the devil Baranov and the deep Pacific Ocean. These adversities and discouragements crushed the independent spirit of Father Herman's associates; they lost confidence in themselves and the respect of the people. After much pleading Father Nectary was allowed, in 1806, to go to Siberia; Father Afanasy, weak in body and spirit, retired to Afognak; Brother Joseph became demoralized and dragged out a pitiful existence in the village of St. Paul. Father Herman remained steadfast in the faith. Trials and tribulations made him only stronger and he would under no circumstances desert his people and let them slip back into the power of the devil. Realizing, however, that the cause of God could be advanced more quickly away from Baranov and his Satanic crew, Father Herman withdrew from their presence and opened a mission on the uninhabited island of Elovoi (Spruce), which he named

✠ Outline of the History of the American Orthodox Mission (in Russian), Valaam Monastery, St. Petersburg, 1894.



New Valaam in memory of the Holy Island in Lake Ladoga.

New Valaam is a small island not many miles from Kodiak. Here the father built himself a cell, a chapel, and a house to accomodate the native orphan children. After a time a number of Aleut families settled on the island, but they lived some distance from the father, who sought a life of solitude. A man asked him once: "Father Herman, do you live alone in the forest? Do you never become lonely?" "No, I am not alone," he said, "God is there as He is everywhere. His angels are there. Is it possible to be lonely in their society? Is it not better to be in their company than in that of people?"

A traveller who saw Father Herman in 1819 described him as of medium height and delicate constitution. His face was pale and kindly and his soft blue eyes invited confidence and bespoke sympathy. His gentle and friendly voice drew people to him, especially the children. His body was girded with a fifteen-pound chain, his shirt was a deer hide, his sandals a piece of rough leather, though at times he went barefoot, and over all he wore a patched monastic cloak. Thus scantily clad he walked over hill and dale, through snow and rain, in heat and in cold, wherever duty called him. A bench covered with a seal skin served for a bed, two bricks for a pillow, and a board for a blanket. His personal habits were simple: he ate sparingly, slept little, prayed long and worked hard. He was tolerant of the weaknesses of others and did not urge them to lead the same ascetic life he did. He was kind to wild animals, the birds and the squirrels were his companions, and the savage bear fed out of his hand.

If he led a secluded life it was not in order to escape the cares of the world, for whenever his presence could serve some useful purpose he came forth. His great object in life was to help and uplift the Aleuts, whom he regarded as mere children in need of protection and guidance. He was ever pleading for them with the officers of the company. "I, the lowest servant of these poor people," he wrote to Lanovsky, "with tears in my eyes ask this favor: be our father and protector. I have no fine speeches to make, but from the bottom of my heart I pray you to wipe the tears from the eyes of the defenseless orphans, relieve the suffering of the oppressed people and show them what it means to be merciful."

Father Herman was a nurse of the natives in a literal as well as a figurative sense. When an epidemic broke out in Kodiak and carried off scores of people, he never left the village, but went from

house to house, nursing the sick, comforting the afflicted and praying with the dying. It is no wonder that the natives loved him and came from afar to hear him tell the story of Christ and His love for them. Father Herman fed the hungry, cheered the troubled, turned strife into concord, and all who came to him discouraged he sent away with God's peace in their hearts. He gave to the orphan children a home, he taught them to read and write, and trained them to do useful and honest work. His daily food he secured through his own efforts and with the help of his pupils. They planted gardens, caught fish, picked wild berries, and dried mushrooms. His influence over the people was remarkable. One Sunday morning he told the natives that Jesus gave His life to save humanity and that it was the duty of every person to help mankind.

When he had concluded, a young woman, Sophia Vlasova, stepped up and offered herself for God's service. The good father saw the hand of God in this sacrifice, for at the time he was in need of a woman to look after his little children, and made Sophia the matron of the orphanage.

The Aleuts were not the only people for whom he labored. Father Herman worked with equal zeal in behalf of the white men and through his efforts many were led to give up their lives of sin and follow the teachings of the Saviour. One of his converts was Baranov's successor, Lanovsky, who when he reached Kodiak boasted of his infidelity and spoke contemptuously of Christianity. He heard of the pious monk and invited him over to Kodiak where night after night the two men discussed questions of faith, immortality, and salvation. The simple words and strong faith of the monk sank deeply into the heart of the naval officer, and years later he and his son and daughters gave up all that they possessed and entered cloisters. Another of his converts was an educated German sea-captain in the employ of the company. He engaged the father in a religious argument and before it ended the captain acknowledged his errors, renounced the heretical doctrines of Luther, and asked to be received into the Orthodox Church.

One day the captain and officers of a Russian man-of-war invited Father Herman on board to dine with them. In the course of the conversation he put this question to them. "What do you, gentlemen, regard as most worthy of love and what do you most wish for your happiness?" One man said he desired riches, a second glory, a third a beautiful wife, a fourth the command of a fine ship. The others present expressed themselves in some similar manner. Is it not true," said Father Herman, "that

all your wishes can be summarized in this short sentence: each of you desires that which he thinks is most worthy of love?" To this statement they all agreed. "If this is true," he continued, "what can there be better, higher, nobler, and more worthy of love than the Lord Jesus Christ, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Author of all living beings. Who provides for all, Who loves all, and Who is the incarnation of love? Should we not above all love God, seek Him and desire Him?" The officers were quite confused and replied that what he said was true, was self-evident. He then asked them if they loved God. "To be sure," said they, "we love God. How could anyone not love Him?" Hearing these words the old man bowed his head and said: 'I, a poor sinner, for forty years have tried to love God and I cannot say that I love Him as I should. To love God is to think of Him always, to serve Him day and night, and to do His will. Do you, gentlemen, love God in this manner, do you often pray to Him, do you always do his will?' With shame they acknowledged their short-comings. "Then let me beseech you, my friends, that from this day forth, from this hour, from this minute, you will love God above all." The officers marveled at his words and long remembered them.

Whenever the workmen of the company got into difficulty with their officers they besought Father Herman to intercede for them. Though old, feeble, and blind, he was always ready to undertake these offices of mercy. One day he pleaded hard with the agent in Kodiak in behalf of a hunter, trying to point out to the officer the Christian duty of forgiveness and the need of charity; but it was to no purpose. The hard-heartedness of the man moved the old father to tears and he exclaimed: "Woe unto him who is not merciful, for no mercy shall be shown to him!" The wife of the agent, who was standing by, retorted by saying: "Father Herman, we are merciful and we give charity four times a year."

What you give to the poor belongs to God and not to you. There will come a time when you, too, will be in trouble and in want and then you will know what mercy means." Turning to the agent he added, "In two years from now you will be transferred to a less desirable place and you will then think of my words." As he said so it came to pass: two years later the agent was carried in chains to Sitka.

Because he was so outspoken in his condemnation of all that was coarse and wicked there were some who hated him and sought to do him harm. One night a party of the company's men invaded his cell in search of furs and money which, they claimed, he had taken from the Aleuts. They ransacked his hut from top to bottom without finding anything of value. This angered them and one of the men took up an axe and commenced tearing up the floor in the hopes of discovering something incriminating. Father Herman watched them sorrowfully and said: "My friend, you have lifted up the axe to no good purpose, for by it you shall die." Not many months afterwards this man with others was sent to Cook Inlet to put down a native uprising and one night a hostile native stole into the camp, picked up the axe and slew him with it.

In 1834 Baron Ferdinand Wrangell, at the time a captain in the Imperial Navy, arrived in Kodiak and went unannounced to make a call on the old father, who was then seventy-eight years of age and blind. Notwithstanding that, he knew who his visitor was and greeted him with the title of "Admiral." Captain Wrangell tried to set him right but the old man told him that on such and such a day he had been named "Admiral," which, as it later proved, was really true.

When Father Herman first came to New Valaam, the devil and his agents tried to get him into their power. They presented themselves to him in the form of human beings to tempt him and in the shape of wild beasts to frighten him; but they wrought no evil in him for by calling on the Saints he drove them off. He was ever on guard against their machinations, and he permitted no one to engage him in conversation or to enter his cell without first making the Sign of the Cross.

As he grew older and holier the good father was allowed to see angels, he was given control over



1 On the feast of the Baptism of our Lord the Holy Church blesses water to be used by the faithful throughout the whole year. After 1825 there was no priest in Alaska to perform this blessing. Gerasim reported having seen an angel bless the waters of the bay for Father Herman.

2 The face must be covered according to the monastic rules.

the elements, and was granted the gift of prophecy. On certain holy nights¹ he watched by the sea-side for the angels to appear and dip the cross in the water, and this holy water he gave to the sick and cripples and they became whole. When an inundation threatened to submerge New Valaam Father Herman checked its force by placing the icon of the Holy Virgin on the beach and ordering the waves not to advance beyond it. Another time he saved his people from a forest fire by marking the limits beyond which the flames were not to spread. A year before it was generally known in Kodiak he told the Aleuts that the Metropolitan of Moscow had passed away. He foretold that an epidemic was coming which would kill off a large part of the native population and that those who were left living would be gathered into fewer villages. Two or three years before his death he told an agent of the company that the rime was not far off when a bishop would be appointed for Alaska. The prophecies just mentioned have already come to pass, and other prophecies made by him will come true in God's good time.

When Father Herman realized that his days on earth were numbered and that it was time to join the saints, he called to him Sophia Vlasov with the girls and Gerasim, his helper. He asked that Sophia spend the remainder of her years on the island and that when she died she be buried at his feet. He advised the girls to marry and the same advice he gave to Gerasim, whom he asked to make his home on New Valaam. Continuing he said: "When I die, don't send for a priest; he will never come! Do not wash my body. Put it on a board, fold my hands on my chest, place me in my monk's mantle; with its lappets cover my face, and with the klobuk my head. If anyone wishes to bid farewell to me, let him kiss my cross. Do not show my face to anybody."² Several days after the above conversation he called for Gerasim to light the candles and read from the Acts of the Apostles. While Gerasim was reading the countenance of the old father was lighted up with a heavenly light and he was heard to say, "Glory to Thee, O Lord." He then told Gerasim to put aside the holy book, for God had granted him another week of life. At the end of that time he again summoned Gerasim and requested him to light the candles and to read from the Acts of the Apostles. In the midst of the reading Gerasim became aware that the cell was filled with light and that a halo played around the holy father's head. Gerasim then knew that Father Herman was a saint and that he had gone to join the heavenly choir.

On the night that Father Herman died the people of Afognak Island saw hovering over New Valaam a column of light. At this wonderful sight they fell on their knees exclaiming, "Our holy man has gone from us." In another village the people observed that same night an object like a human being borne aloft from New Valaam towards Heaven.

Gerasim and the girls became frightened at what they had witnessed and immediately dispatched a messenger to Kodiak to tell what had happened. The officer of the company sent back word not to inter the body until he came over with a priest and a casket. But before he could start, there blew up such a storm as had never been seen, and no one dared to venture out to sea for a whole month. During that whole time the body of the saint lay in his cell without any decomposition setting in. Seeing the hand of God in the storm and recalling Father Herman's last words, Gerasim and the girls buried the father according to his wishes. Immediately the wind died down, the sea became calm, and the sun came out.

In 1842 the ship on which Bishop Innokenty was sailing from Kamachatka to Alaska ran into a severe storm which threatened to wreck it. The good bishop prayed for help to the saints, and remembering the pious Father Herman he said to himself, 'If you have pleased God, Father Herman, make the wind change.' Immediately a fair wind sprung up and in good time the boat was safe in the harbor of St. Paul. In gratitude for the deliverance, the bishop held a service over the grave of Father Herman.

Thirty years after the death of the saint the priest of Kodiak visited his resting place and found that the grass on the grave is ever green, summer and winter, and that the cross is as new and as sound as the day it went up.

The natives of Kodiak love to tell the story of Father Herman, Alaska's Saint, who is so near and dear to them. He left no picturesque missions or learned colleges to speak of his achievements, but he planted Christianity in the hearts of the Aleuts and that shall endure as long as the Aleuts live. On the walls of Valaam Monastery may be seen hanging a picture of New Valaam and a likeness of Father Herman and as the monks pass by they cross themselves and pray that the time may soon come when his bones shall rest in the sacred ground of the monastery and when the Church shall officially recognize him as a saint.



THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL OF THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL AT SITKA



Chronicles of the Orthodox Church in Alaska and beyond

Russian Orthodox American Messenger - Vol. III, No. 10, 15-27 May 1899, p. 277-286



—I/II—

I - PREFACE.

THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX Church at Sitka, consecrated in the name of the Archangel and Archi-Strategos Michael, enjoys an enviable historical, renown of the most sympathetic character not in Alaska alone, but in all America. It is the subject of a whole literature, historical and descriptive. This temple of God excites in its visitors feelings of admiration and affectionate reverence. The divine grace visibly abides in it, hence people feel deeply moved, soothed, pacified, in its devout, sheltering shadow.

Whoever has been in the East, whoever has wandered among the places hallowed by evangelical

memories, knows and remembers the feelings of peaceful joy which descend into the pilgrim's heart as he stands on the porch of the Church of the Resurrection, at the foot of Golgotha, on Mount Thabor, on the Mount of Olives, by the pure waters of Jordan or in humble Nazareth...

After accomplishing His holy mission, the One eternal Orient Sun bestowed upon His imperial Church, indissolubly united with the Apostles by the bond of spiritual succession, the gift of profound impenetration and action by grace.

II - AN HISTORICAL PAGE—DESCRIPTION AND GENERAL REVIEW

ON THE 20TH of November 1898 the Cathedral Church of the Archangel Michael at Sitka celebrated its semi-centennial anniversary. The celebration was of a purely ecclesiastical character—a

prayerful invocation of the divine blessing and protection on this Orthodox sanctuary.

According to official and private authorities, the foundation of the church was laid on the 20th of

November 1848. That was a time in the life of the Russian colonies in America, which has receded into a remote past, as regards both Russian and American history, judging from the advance made by both nations in the course of that half century.

The activity of Russia was then distinguished in the colonies by a policy of conciliation of the most benevolent and cautious character. The Russo-American Company, which managed local affairs, consisted of men by no means of narrow views, worthy representatives of the great world-power which was developing the economic resources of the territory in her charge, without exhausting its energies or natural reserve fund. Much, very much peaceful, patient and solid work was done by those men for the establishment of social order in that country.

The history of Russian-America proceeded in its quiet, steady course until the moment when it ended in the amicable transfer of the territory to a friendly power.

The Russo-American Co. had always placed above all other interests of any kind soever the instruction of the American natives in the spirit of the Orthodox faith, which shone on the sky of Russia's past like to a friendly constellation—that heavenly crown which delighted the seer of the New Testament Revelation. It was the Company which defrayed the cost of the construction of the beautiful church at Sitka.

Russian history was entirely built up by the Cross and by prayer. Such has been the fundamental law of its growth, beginning with Kiev and Moscow, and ending with her most important undertakings of modern times. This same law was most properly applied also by the earliest Russian pioneers in America to their new American settlements. The movement was gentle, quiet, out progressive and steady. All the dangers and hardships of their existence, cast into so great a distance from home, were compensated by their spiritual joy in Christ. The Orthodox faith, the never to-be-forgotten leading motives of Russian life—Christian brotherly love, kindness, and the gentleness characteristic of the Slavic nature,—always asserted themselves with full national force in the types, of the best Russian men scattered beyond the Ocean. Thus the light from the East went on its way, spread over the new land, and burns to this day in its most precious ancient repository.

In the course of half a century many disasters, many trials passed over the Cross which surmounts

the Archangel's venerable church, but that Cross still stands victorious, shining brightly.

Quietly, unaccompanied by the noise of battle, the Russian flag was lowered in America. There were some tears,—some complaints; some speeches were made on the forlornness of the spiritually orphaned Russian element. But the works of God are for eternity. The church at Sitka kept her children and added to their number, lifting prayerful hands to the Savior, the Hope of the sorrowing, and to His blessed Mother, that the Lord might, out of His grace and power, keep from harm the Orthodox community and the sanctuary of their faith."

In spite of manifold trials, vicissitudes and human prophecies, the church of Sitka is still by the grace of God, equal to her mission, is still a landmark of honor—and authority among her own, and even among strange flocks. Truth is truth still, history is history; all else changes, vanishes; but Divine Truth shall prevail for all time.

The present mission of this church, which continues to hold its honored historical ground, consists principally in upholding the Orthodox faith. It has no high worldly ambitions, pursues no disciplinarian or political aims, but only preaches 'the essential principles of the Christian faith' (*in essentialibus Fidei Christianes*), the most obvious truths of her own confession, calling all alike into the pale, of Divine grace and glory, into the province of historical truth, engraved upon her tablets by the authority of Christ and of His holy Apostles.

Revealed truth has been given to man, and defined for his use in an easily intelligible manner; to teach that truth." says that wise man Gladstone ✠, "is not only the church's special ministry, but God's direct command."

Though at times warred against, the Church does not make war herself, but only announces the clearest doctrine of liberty in Christ, which consists in doing, without compulsion, that which is necessary according to the law, human and divine. The Church standing on so high a plane of spiritual order, rests all her hopes upon the Lord, in the midst of 'all the tempests, tumultuous seas, and other perturbations of the human spirit and its history.

The Orthodox Church is placed at present in sufficiently favorable conditions on the territory of so free and enlightened a country as the United States of North America—no longer a bud wrapped in the folds of the calyx, but a ripening fruit, if such be the will of the Divine Sower. Two churches,

drawn to each other by mutual historical and affinities-religious motherhood, on one side, kindly and respectful confidence on the other—have taken more than one step towards each other of late years, more decided and with more reality than the well-known Memorial to the Most Holy Governing Russian Synod, or the Pastoral Exhortation of the Scotch Bishop Dr. Forbes, which was issued in the middle of the current century.

All that is necessary, as remarks the Rev. Dean of the Davenport Cathedral church in North America, R. P. Hale, is that we should be given a chance to know the complete, accurate truth about one another—the truth once and forever imparted to the Saints'.²

For the twelve icons which adorn the entire screen, over fifty pounds of solid silver were used, of the aggregate value of no less than \$6,000. Among these icons, that of the patron of the church, the Archangel Michael, deserves especial notice. The ship "Neva," on her way to Sitka, was wrecked at the foot of Mount Edgecomb, with most distressing results. The sea swallowed a large and rich booty, but miraculously cast forth the icon of the patron of Sitka's church, the Archangel Michael. It was found on the beach among the breakers of the Pacific.

The next ikon to this is also deserving of notice: it is that of the Saints Zosima and Sabbatius, monks of the Monastery of Solovetsk, in the glacial Ocean. It is a gift and remembrance from the crew of the ship "Nasliednik," which was disastrously wrecked in the fifties, the crew being saved by the merciful dispensation of God.

Another icon of great value, from the beauty of the painting and adornment, is that of the Savior and of His Mother. At one time the face of the latter had paled somewhat in color, but it has been very skilfully restored by Mrs. Emmans, who kindly offered her services and did the work artistically and with a care worthy of the task.

When the Royal Gates are open, the entire sanctuary is visible. Its most marked feature, are the altar with its appurtenances and the Bema³.

The appurtenances of the altar are the following: the Antimins, a sacramental *sine qua non* of the sacred table. That of the Cathedral at Sitka was consecrated and signed by the Metropolitan Innocentius, the first pioneer of Orthodox Christianity in those parts. The cross lying on the altar was made at Bethlehem and contains a particle of the Holy Cross from Golgotha. It was presented with his blessing by the Metropolitan Isidore to the illustrious Innocentius, then Bishop. On the same altar reposes a Testament in 16-o, in a splendid setting tastefully incrustated with French paste diamonds, and with small icons in mother-of-pearl. This Testament was presented to Bishop Innocentius by Archimandrite Antonius, the friend and spiritual father of the great Russian pulpit orator and the most profoundly learned theologian of the Orthodox Church, Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow.

On the wall behind the altar of the chief sanctuary is a large icon of the Savior, which was brought by Bishop Innocentius from the city of Petropavlovsk in Kamtchatka. It was shamefully lacerated by the swords and bayonets of the marines of the allied squadron which made war on Russia in 1855. It is now protected by a costly gilt silver casing, and is rendered doubly precious by the patriotic associations which make of it a sacred national relic.

There are in the same sanctuary several religious paintings, mostly of subjects from the Gospel, of excellent academic workmanship. The finest is that representing the Annunciation. Among the other works of art which decorate this sanctuary, one of the most notable is an Annunciation in carved ivory, remarkable for its size, which exceeds that of most works in this rare and costly material.

Lastly we should mention the lately donated icon of the Resurrection, painted on a board cut from a tree of the grove of Mamre, which is in Hebron; the style of the painting is Greek. This icon was consecrated at Bethlehem, on the spot of the birth of Christ, and at Jerusalem, at the Holy Sepulcher. It bears the seal and autograph signature, with the date of July the 8th 1889, of the Patriarch of Jerusalem Kyrios Nicodemus.

¹ Archpriest J. Yanysh, "On Intercommunion between the Orthodox and Anglican Churches." "The Eastern Church and Reunion"; Church Review, April, p. 269

² Pages 282–283 are missing in the digital file

³ The raised platform behind the altar, where the Bishop's seat is placed—*apse* in ancient Catholic

TO BE CONCLUDED





Instruction of the Most Rev. Metropolitan Innocentius TO THE MISSIONARY AT NUSHAGAK, THEOPHANUS, HIEROMONK

'Russian Orthodox American Messenger' - Vol. III, No. 20, 15-27 October 1899, p. 534-543

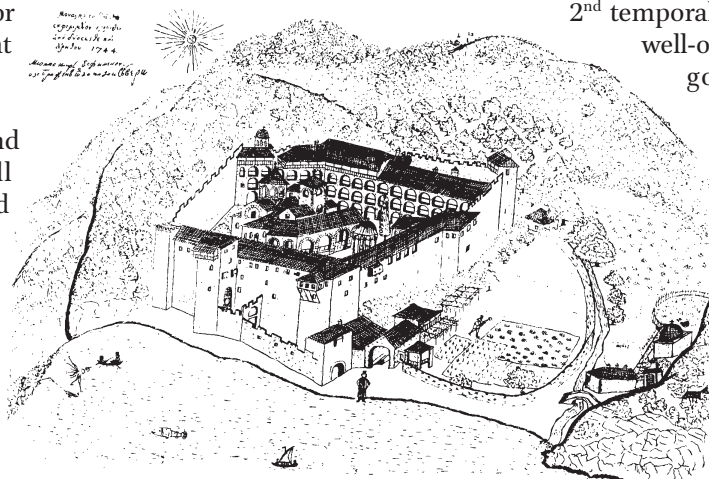
PUBLISHED BY THE ORDER OF RIGHT REV. TIKHON FOR THE GUIDANCE OF
THE ORTHODOX MISSIONARIES IN ALASKA

TO LEAVE ONE'S native country and seek places remote, wild, devoid of many of the comforts of life, for the sake of turning to the path of truth men who are still wandering in the darkness of ignorance, and of illuming with the light of the Gospel them that have not yet beheld this saving light, —this is an act truly holy and apostolic. Blessed he whom the Lord selects and appoints to such a ministry! But doubly blessed he who labors with undivided zeal, sincerity and love in the work of conversion and enlightenment, enduring the hardships and sufferings which he encounters in the course of his ministry, for 'his reward is great in heaven!' But woe unto him who is called and appointed to tell the good news, and who does not tell it! and woe still more unto him who, after traveling over land and seas to convert men, makes them he

has converted into sons of Gehenna, worse than himself!

And so thou, a priest art now appointed to a work for which thou shalt *either* 'enter into the joy of the Lord,' as a good and faithful servant, or receive condemnation, as a false, wicked, and slothful servant. And may the Lord preserve thee from the latter fate and grant thee the will and the strength to compass the former! When thou findest thyself in the place of thy ministry, thy duties shall be many and peculiar:—1st spiritual, as celebrant at the altar and preacher of the word of God;

2nd temporal, as a member of a well-ordered community's government, and therefore do I here offer thee, for thy guidance, a few instructions Bearing on both classes of duties.



PART FIRST—MOST ESSENTIAL INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING A MISSIONARY'S SPIRITUAL DUTIES

The instructions bearing on this subject are very clearly set forth in the Ukaz of 1777, in which it is said 'that he should not regard as his duty the hasty administration of baptism (to converts), but should do his best to instil into them the force

of Christian teaching, and to guide them towards all manner of good morals, without which baptism administered to savages can hardly be called anything but an abuse of one of the greatest Sacraments of the Christian religion.'

I - Preparation to Missionary Work.

1 The first and most efficient preparation is prayer, which alone can open the spring of highest teaching and bring down a blessing upon every good beginning and work. Therefore always, and especially before addressing those whom thou wishest to illumine with the light of truth, turn towards God in ardent prayer.

2 Cultivate always a modest and lowly spirit, and do not presumptuously promise thyself extraordinary or certain success in thy labors. Such expectations proceed from pride, and grace is not granted unto the proud. Remember always that the conversion of a sinner or a heathen to the right path cometh not from us or from our skill, but directly and solely from God. If it be His pleasure to convert anybody, then the simplest words (so they be full of the truth), from the lips of a simple reader will touch the hearer's heart and sink deep into it. and bear fruit in due time. If it be not His pleasure, —the most convincing words from the lips of the greatest orator will have no saving effect. For we all, from the first to the last, are nothing but tools in the hands of God.

3 Every time that thou addressest thyself to thy work, strive to be calm and to have full control of thy faculties, else canst thou not put into words what thou knowest most thoroughly.

4 Do not begin any work without previous thought, and do not perform it in a careless and absent-minded way, for thy work is God's work, and he is accursed that does it negligently.

5 Remember always that if the preacher has not within himself love to his work and to them

to whom he is preaching, the very best and most eloquent expounding of the doctrine may remain absolutely without effect, for love alone creates, — therefore do thou strive to cultivate within thyself the spirit of holy love.

6 Make it a rule, when thou visitest remote localities (where the foundations of Christianity have already been laid), not to begin any service, nor to administer any Sacrament without first giving to them thou visitest if only some brief instruction.

7 Thou shouldst naturally begin to preach the word of God there where thou hast thy permanent residence. But should circumstances compel thee or opportunity induce thee to visit remoter places, then, even though thou shouldst not as yet have accomplished much among those who live in thy own vicinity, do not miss a chance of going anywhere, and be ready to teach in any place and anybody, according to age, condition and time.

8 Choose for thy teaching and for talks with the natives preferably such times when they are all assembled together. For this purpose thou mayest either go to them, or, if feasible, invite them to come where thou shaft be thyself.

9 At first, while still ignorant of the natives' language, thou shouldst employ an interpreter, to translate thy words for them. Take care to select for the post a man from among the most pious and well-intentioned, and instruct him in good time in the Catechism. It will be best to employ always the same interpreter.

II - The Order of Preaching

10 Christianity is a need, and a comfort which appeals principally to the heart, not to the mind alone, and therefore, when instructing in the faith, the teacher should aim at acting more on the heart than on the mind. The mind's curiosity is insatiable; but he who feels in his heart the craving for faith, who tastes of its comfort, —he will receive it quickly and with ease, and it shall not remain within him barren of fruits. But in order to act on other men's hearts, a man must speak from his own heart. "From out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Hence his lips and wisdom only shall prove irresistible to the hearts of his hearers, whose own heart overflows with faith, and he alone shall know without fail how and when to speak, and what to say. Do thou therefore note and take advantage of such moments when the hearts of them that listen to thee are well disposed. That is the favorable time for the sowing of the Word.

11 Methods of instruction vary according to the state of mind, age, and faculties of him who is to be instructed. Bear in mind, with regard to this, that those with whom thou shalt have to deal, are, in manners and ideas, heathens and erring, and in grade of culture—children. To these facts should be adapted the method and order of instruction in the saving truths.

The order of instruction should be made to conform to that which Providence itself points out to us.

The law of Moses was given earlier than the law of the Gospel; and even before the written law of Moses, the unwritten natural law was known and the author of it—God Almighty, the Creator. Just before the law of Moses solemn signs were manifested of God's power, almightiness and glory.

Keeping in view this great and universal model, do thou order thy small and individual work as follows:

a Starting from the existence and harmony of visible things, demonstrate the existence (which, however, none of those people appear to doubt), the almightiness, power and glory of the Creator of the Universe, His goodness, knowledge of all things, etc. At the same time with this, tell them the story of the creation of the first man, and of his being the progenitor of all men and peoples, who, in this respect, are living monuments and visible proofs of the Creator's supreme power and wisdom. Then explain how man consists of soul

and body, in what he differs from other animate beings, how he is possessed of an immortal spirit, and indicate the intent of God in creating man i. e.—blessedness.

b Further, show them the moral law of Moses, as being the divinely written natural law, the means towards achieving blessedness; all this do simply and concisely.

Note. When speaking of the law, thou shalt surely hear from the crudest savages things confirming that law, which is graven indelibly upon the tablets of every human heart. Thus, for instance, who does not know that a man should honor his parents, that he should not steal, kill, etc.?! Try to arouse this feeling in them, and make use of it for thy purpose.

c When thy hearers shall have become convinced of the existence of God and the law, then (but not before), show them the necessity of observing the law, as being the will of God, and the visible consequences of not observing and of breaking it. Illustrate this with a brief narrative of the Deluge—(the tradition of it, though confused, exists among savage races)—as being the consequence of not keeping the law of God; tell them of the blessing bestowed by God upon the Patriarchs after the Deluge, and especially upon Abraham (whose descendants exist to this day)—as being the consequence of keeping the law.

d Only now begin the Evangelical instruction proper, in the way that Jesus Christ Himself began it i. e. by announcing repentance and consolation, and the approach of the Kingdom of Heaven. Try to lead them to a feeling of repentance or of something nearly akin to it. This can be accomplished by convincing them that they will inevitably be punished for disregarding the law written within their hearts, in this life and the next, or if not in this life, so much more heavily, and for all eternity, in the next; that no one can, of his own power, escape these punishments, etc.

Here thou shouldst shape thy speech so as to arouse in them a certain dread of the future; and when thou shalt have brought them into this frame of mind, then do thou announce to them Jesus Christ, the Savior, Redeemer and Hope of all men, to give them comfort.

Note. To bring souls to a state of repentance and contrition is one of the preacher's most difficult tasks. But this condition is one of the most

important factors in the work of conversion; it is as the ploughed up soil, ready to receive the seed of Christianity, which then can sink into the very depth of the heart, and, with the later assistance of grace, can bear abundant fruit.

When thou announcest the Savior to a sinner who feels guilty before the law, thou dost suddenly and without any persuasion thereto implant ' in him the love of this Savior, Whom as yet he does not know. And one who has in this manner learned to love Christ, will love Him all the more when he does know Him, and will believe all that He said and all that thou shalt say about Him. It will then be easy for thee preach to unfold all the mysteries of our salvation, and for those who listen to thee in such a disposition of mind to receive them.

e Having demonstrated the necessity of the redemption of the human race and shown the greatness of God's love towards men, thou shalt tell of the coming into the world of the promised Redeemer,—of His birth before the ages from the Father (this will be the time and place to touch on the mystery of the Holy Trinity),—of the incarnation, nativity, and earthly life of Jesus Christ, of His teaching, sufferings, and death, of the resurrection of the dead (in which all American savages believe in their own peculiar way),—of the future life, and the retribution to be dealt to the good and the wicked, according to their deeds.

f Lastly shalt thou tell them that Jesus Christ, during His life on earth, had many disciples, out of whom He chose twelve, imparting to them a special grace and power, and whom he sent forth into the world, to preach the Gospel unto all creation;—tell them how all that these chosen ones taught, and all' that Jesus commanded is recorded in their writings, which have come down to us, and which are known to nearly all the nations of the earth.—and how all good and simple-minded men to whom it has been given to hear their teachings, have received them with joy and have followed, and are following, in His steps. Tell them that such men are usually called Christians, and that those among them who have strictly kept the commandments of Jesus Christ have become Saints, and the bodies of many among them have reposed these many centuries exempt from corruption etc.

After this (on no account before), thou mayest make them an offer, and ask them whether they should like to join those who believe in Jesus Christ and hope to obtain through Him eternal salvation, blessedness, etc., etc. This instruction will be

sufficient at first for such as have not before heard the word of saving truth.

13 In expounding matters concerning the faith, thou shouldst express thyself with deliberation, clearness, precision, and, as far as possible, concisely; otherwise thy preaching will have but poor success. In imparting the teaching of Jesus Christ it is not necessary to expatiate too much; *i. e.* thou shouldst not repeat all that He said, but only say that the entire doctrine of Christ is comprised in this: *that we repent, believe in Him, and have towards Him and all men a feeling of pure, disinterested love.* In confirmation of His teaching, thou mayest briefly mention His miracles.

14 When thou shalt see that thy hearers have understood thee, and when they express a wish to be counted among the flock of Christ, then tell them: a) of the *conditions* upon which they may be admitted among the faithful; b) of *Holy Baptism*, as the mystic means of regeneration through water and the Spirit, which opens the new Christian life, and of the other Sacraments as the means of receiving the grace of Jesus Christ; and, c) of the manner after which he should live, who aims at being a true Christian and, consequently, at obtaining all the fruits of salvation.

a *The conditions* upon which one who wishes to become a disciple of Jesus Christ may be admitted; are the following: 1).—he must renounce his former creed, give up Shamanism and not listen to the Shamans; 2).—he must not observe any customs contrary to Christianity; 3).—he must agree to perform all things that shall be demanded of him by the new law and the Church; 4).—he must confess his sins.

b Those who are willing and desirous to fulfil all the above named conditions must be told that entering the Christian fold is a great and important act, which must be performed solemnly, the neophyte renouncing in the presence of witnesses all that is opposed to Christianity, pledging himself to be a disciple of Christ and confirming all this by receiving holy Baptism, which is at once the visible *token* of having entered the community of Christians, the *means* of purifying the soul from sins, and the *door* for the reception of the other gifts, or means for imparting the grace of God in other words—the Sacraments of Holy Church, which should here be explained.

This also is the time for explaining the importance and dignity of the holy Cross and the virtue of the sign of the cross; also the reason for the reverence

which the Church pays to the holy icons, and her beneficent intent in so doing.

Note In speaking of icons, it might be advisable to mention, among other things, that, for the unlettered, they supply the place of books, etc.

C As regards the *instruction about how a Christian should conduct himself*, it is best not to go into too much detail at first, but merely say that *whoever wants to be a true Christian* i. e. a disciple of Jesus Christ, and to profit by all the gifts which the Redemption has brought to man, should, 1), with faith, hope and love, give himself up to Jesus Christ; and, 2), imitate him in all things, i. e. try, as far as possible, always to act as He acted. Here Christ's virtues as described in the Gospel should be briefly touched upon, so that the neophyte may understand exactly how he ought to act.

Note. For instance: Jesus Christ forgave His enemies, and we should do likewise.

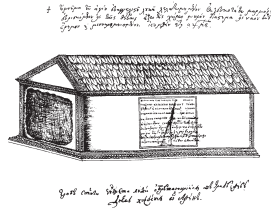
15 Lastly it should be shown that no one, especially if he rely on himself and his own strength

alone, can, without divine assistance, be a true disciple of Christ, and that if Jesus Christ, out of His great love towards men, had not granted us His help, no one ever could become a true follower of His; but that now every one who wishes for it may receive assistance from Him. This assistance is the Holy Spirit, Which is given for the asking, and is to be obtained chiefly through prayer. And prayer is a turning of the heart towards God with submission, faith and hope. We can pray at all times and in all places; but divine grace and help are especially near when we ask for them in the prayers of the Church,

16 Such a course of instruction is sufficient for new converts. Further Christian instruction—as an extensive and more spiritual interpretation of the ten commandments, etc., expounding the words of Christ written down in the Gospel, the teachings of the Apostles, and (in part), the traditions of the Holy Fathers—such instruction cannot be called elementary and offers spiritual nourishment not fit for infants in the faith, but for the maturer, or at least for those who are growing up in Christianity.

They deceive themselves who speak self-confidently that they know men well enough, and that they do not allow themselves to be deceived. Who can know what kind of spirit is in a man—except only God, Who knows the secrets of the heart? Even the great saints were mistaken about people. For example: for a long time St. Basil considered a certain hypocritical heretic to be a holy man, and he defended him from many attackers until, finally, convinced of the heretic's falseness, Basil was bitterly disappointed. St. Gregory the Theologian baptized a certain philosopher, Maximus by name, and liked the philosopher in his home, However, this Maximus was as a serpent. After a period

him so much that he kept sharing his table with him. as dangerous and cunning of time, through intrigue and bribes, Maximus convinced numerous Constantinopolians to recognize him as patriarch in place of St. Gregory. When, after great confusion, this trial was removed, some rebuked Gregory for having kept his greatest enemy with him. The saint replied: "We are not to blame if we do not discern someone's evil. God alone knows the inner secrets of a man. And we are told by the commandments to open our hearts with fatherly love to all who come to us." A good man cannot easily understand the malice of a malevolent man.



CHRONICLES OF THE ORTHODOX MISSION IN THE FAR EAST

“Russian Orthodox American Messenger”
Vol. III, No. 5, 13 March 1899, p. 156–159

From our Mission in China - From a Missionary's Letter

THE AGITATION IN Pekin in reality amounts to nothing. One cannot help being seriously sorry for the poor Chinese, who are treated with utter disregard of all justice and right. Last year I myself was an eye witness of the following revolting incident. A certain foreigner—a dentist by profession—at a stoppage of a train at a station between Tan-ku and Tian-tsin, began, with the greatest assurance, to pull eggs out of a Chinese vendor's basket, and to throw them in his face, and when some of the Chinese bystanders remonstrated, he went for them in the same manner. They became exasperated and began to throw stones into the windows of our carriage. Fortunately for us the train started just then, and we escaped the retribution richly deserved by our fellow-passenger. Can you wonder after this that the Chinese detest foreigners? I myself am profoundly convinced that the Chinese are the most peaceable people in the world and incapable of violence unless

exasperated into it. In their intercourse with us missionaries, they are infinitely more courteous and pleasanter than the civilized nations. What a tumult of laughter and shouting greeted me in Berlin and London when I appeared on the streets in the garb of my order, the “civilized” police looking on in silence, or with a sympathetic grin! Nothing of the sort ever happened to me in the streets of Pekin and other Chinese cities. As to the villages, I am received there as I would be in my own native Russia. Just at this present time I ride every day through villages to superintend some building, alone on a humble donkey, with a lad for driver, and meet with nothing but courtesy—at the very time that the papers all but predict a St. Bartholomew massacre of foreigners.— A while ago we received into the church the commander of all the Albazins With God's blessing it will not be difficult, through his influence, to induce his whole people to return into the Orthodox Church.

From our Mission in Japan - From a letter of Missionary J.A.

WE ARE GRADUALLY getting grafted here on to the good tree of the Church Catholic, transformed, though not rapidly, from a wild olive tree. Soon after Peter's Day (29th of June) we had a general convocation of priests, deacons, catechizers, and representatives from the churches of our Japanese Mission. In the current year there have been 1041 baptisms, —295 deaths; up to the last convocation there had been 23,514; consequently there are now 24,260 Christians. The number of all who minister to the Church, besides the Bishop

and the two appointees from the Holy Synod of Russia, is as follows: native priests—27; preachers—60; assistants of the latter—56; disciples (of the preachers)—29; and 3 persons likewise engaged in propaganda work; altogether 183. In view of the late immoderate rise in prices, the catechizers' salaries have been raised by 2 ana (or rubles) a month, so that they now receive from 10 to 16 anas. For a man with a family this is not much at all, since he has absolutely no other means of support. A few are partly supported by

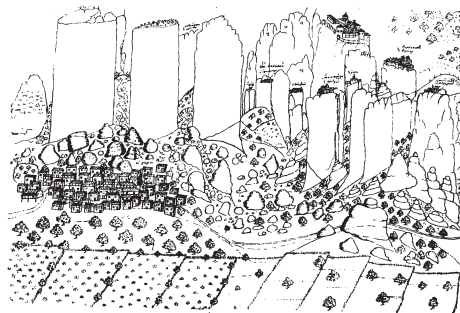
the Christian communities; but then they receive less from the Mission.

... Everybody here now complains of a general coolness towards the propaganda. This is a period of fermentation caused by the collision between various views and elements of practical life—Buddhism, Shintoism, Christianity in its different denominations. The old order of things is passing away, although it is not given up, for it created the national forms of life; and now, side by side with lofty Christian feeling, we see the completest indifference to everything Christian bred by intercourse with the European residents, and Europeans generally, since a great many Japanese have visited Europe. Things will of course better themselves in the end; Christianity will be adopted more consciously and deliberately, not out of senseless imitation of Europeans, as has too often been the case up to this time. But it cannot be denied that the present time is one of religious frigidity...

Of the attitude which the Japanese themselves hold towards our Church, you may judge by the following notice, which appeared very lately in one of the Japanese papers, on Bishop Nicholas, the head of the Orthodox Mission in Japan: "Nicholas has now reached the advanced age of 60. When he first came to our country, he was 23 or 25. Through all this long period of time he has studied and labored, devoting himself wholly and unremittingly to the work of propaganda, so that he may justly be styled a most remarkable man... After graduating in Russia from Theological Academy, it was in this country that he thoroughly mastered the Chinese, Buddhist and Shintoist literatures, invariably retiring to rest at 11 o' clock and rising at 3 o'clock in the morning. And at the present writing many young men might envy his vigor and industry. He is now entirely absorbed in the work of translating the Bible. Were he in Russia, he would occupy a very high position, and great honor would

be paid him. Here, instead, his apartment is most unpretending: in his room are a table, two or three chairs and a stove—that is all. Three or four years ago the Holy Synod of Russia determined to institute an archbishopric in the extreme East of the Russian Empire, at Nikolayefsk. The incumbent to govern the Greek churches, beginning with Siberia, in China and Japan, and to have jurisdiction over all the priests of the Eastern Naval Squadron; (it is well known that it is obligatory for the Russians to have one priest, and sometimes two, on each war vessel). When this decision was arrived at, it was proposed to appoint Nicholas to this archbishopric. But he refused, saying, 'I have long ago determined to end my life among the Japanese believers, whose number is great already. Personal interest and honors are not sufficient inducements to alter my original intention. I shall be content if I am permitted to end my days as plain bishop. —And when all the Russian bishops heard of this, each one praised Nicholas' virtue and firmness and the project was given up.'

"Our Bishop is known to all Japan, not personally of course, but simply as plain 'Nicholas'; indeed the Orthodox doctrine is mostly spoken of as 'the teaching of Nicholas,' he having begun the work and carried it on so far alone. When our Grand Duke Cyril Vladimirovitch was here a while ago, a native prince, Kan-Lu was present at one of our church services; he was pleased with it, and agreed that our way of propagating our faith through native preachers was more direct and logical than carrying on the work entirely through Europeans, as other churches do. How long it will be before the rulers themselves make up their minds to change their religion, —that, of course, God alone knows; just as, in the old days, no one expected St. Vladimir to act as he did. God ordereth all things unto salvation. Ours be it to labor, according as we are called"...





THE NECESSITY OF ESTABLISHING ANOTHER MISSION OF THE GREEK CHURCH ON THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER, ALASKA

“Russian Orthodox American Messenger” - January Supplement, 1904–1905, p. 44–47

522½ Devisadero St., San Francisco Cal.

Rev. Sebastian Dabovich.

Sir:

In addressing you on the subject of the necessity of establishing another mission of the Greek Church on the Kus—kokwim River, Alaska, I am speaking at the request of and on behalf of a great number of Alaskan Natives who have felt the influence of the Greek Church and who desire to continue in that faith. I have spent the past year on the Kuskokwim River and can speak advisedly on the subject. The river is eight hundred miles long, being second to the Yukon in length in Alaska. There is now on this river a Russian mission and the priest there is Rev. Pavloff. Owing to the vast territory to be worked over he cannot broach all parts of the river oftener than once in two years and sometime he does not reach the lower river but once in three years.

The people on the upper part of the river meet no missionary but of the Greek Church while those on the lower river come into contact with the Moravian missionaries constantly. However, the influence of the Greek Church having once reached these people, it never leaves them and such being the case there is an absolute necessity of their having a spiritual adviser who can reach all of them at least once or twice a year. The members of the Greek Church there are seldom if ever lax in their devotion. With a mission established at a

certain point the people will travel many miles to attend service or to talk with the priest.

I spent my time on the lower part of the river where the priest had not visited for over two years owing to his time being taken in going to the upper part of the river and in making trips to the villages on the tundra. To show you the influence of the church on the people of the lower river I will say, that in entering a village it is at once evident whether that village is Greek or protestant. The Greek villages have an air of cleanliness and better living, that is lacking in the other villages. In the houses one sees in a prominent place an Icon and before this they pray both morning and evening. Before and after eating they never fail to cross themselves. I am told that on the upper part of the river every holy day is observed with as much reverence as is possible in the absence of a presiding priest: This speaks strong-in favor of the power of a church. I am a protestant and it is with regret that I am able to say that none of our churches can show native converts who exhibit the same devotion, reverence and respect for matters holy. With ministers constantly among them the natives who are protestant converts show indifference and often disrespect for religious tendencies.

The Russian mission on the Kuskokwim river is about three hundred miles from the mouth of the river, and is the beginning of the upper river country. Let me cite one more instance of the lasting influence of the Greek church. —Bethel is the headquarter of four Moravian missionaries. Ten

miles below this place is a village that is Greek. For many years the Moravians have tried to gain control of this village. Weekly services are held here, but the people are as yet unwilling to leave their church. This show too the growing need of another mission, for people, left to their own devices will grow lax and will not worship in another church or in their own.

The natives throughout the Kuskokwim territory are self supporting, the fur trade being pursued here. They live on fresh and dried fish of which there is an abundance. The game supply is large and varied. Like the natives in some other part of Alaska they are a diseased and dying race, but those in whom is white blood, are healthful and will probably be as long—lived as their forefathers.

Few people realize the extent of the Kuskokwim territory; and the importance of thorough mission

work is as important here as elsewhere in the Alaskan territory. It is a splendid field for work and there is much to be done.

I feel that my plea on behalf of these people is not strong enough, but will leave it to you to impress it more strongly on those in whose hands lies the power of establishing new missions.

Again let me say that I am writing for and at the request of the people who cannot speak for themselves to the outside world.

Trusting that you will lend your aid in this matter, I am yours truly,

Marie Joaquin.

September 20th, 1903.





Great Orthodox Hierarchs of the 19th & 20th Centuries

BISHOP IGNATIUS BRIANCHANINOV

Orthodox Life, 1983 (2), p. 47-49

BISHOP IGNATIUS, WHOSE baptismal name was Dimitry Alexandrovich Brianchaninov, was born into a distinguished noble family on February 6, 1807, in the village of Pokrovskoye, located in the Griazovets area of Vologda Province. He was the fruit of the ardent prayers of his parents, who had been childless for many years. Even from his earliest years, the future hierarch displayed a special predisposition to prayer and to ethical and spiritual reading. His favorite book, after the Gospels, was *The School of Piety* in the five volumes of an old edition, containing brief lives of the saints and selections of their sayings. Following an excellent primary education given him at home by private tutors, in his sixteenth year he was sent to St. Petersburg to the Central Academy of Engineering. But even while on the road there, the future churchman resolved that he tell his father of his covert intention "to go into monasticism," which his father had not considered worthy of serious thought. Dimitry Alexandrovich distinguished himself as a student and came to the attention of the Emperor Nicholas Pavlovich I and Her Imperial Majesty, the Empress, who received him into the ranks of her pensioners.

While studying military engineering in the school, Dimitry Brianchaninov occupied himself with "noetic" prayer and led the life of a true monk, partaking frequently of the Sacred Mysteries of Christ at the Valaam Conventual House and visiting monks of the St. Alexander Nevsky Lavra, who were remarkable for their spiritual life. As a result he firmly resolved to be tonsured, despite the displeasure of his parents and of the Emperor himself. This decision was furthered by his acquaintance with the future elder of Optina, Hieromonk Leonid.

And so in spite of all the obstacles arising from his social position, Dimitry Brianchaninov, although already an officer, succeeded in 1827 in receiving a discharge and entered the St. Alexander of Svir Monastery as a novice, where he whole-heartedly devoted himself to the guidance of his elder, the same Father Leonid (Lev in the great schema).

Subsequently, he transferred with Fr. Leonid, first to the Ploschchansky Hermitage and later to Optina. His father, using the illness of his mother as a pretext, tried to lure the future hierarch out of the monastery; illness further tied him for a time to his parental home in Vologda. The local bishop, His Grace Stephen, showed a deep interest in him, tonsuring him with the name Ignatius on the 28th of June 1831 and shortly ordained him. In 1832 he was appointed as the organizer of the Pelshemsky Lopotov Monastery in the Vologda Diocese and in the following year, he was elevated to the rank of abbot. A Synodal decree designated him the superior of the St. Nicholas-Ugreshsky Monastery in the Moscow Diocese, but at the request of the Emperor, he was made head of the St. Sergius Hermitage near St. Petersburg and elevated to the rank of archimandrite (1834). After laboring strenuously for the monastery's well-being, in 1838 he was made supervisor of all the monasteries in the Diocese of St. Petersburg, and was accorded universal respect and spiritual confidence, first as an administrator, and then as an elder in the religious guidance of the monastics. It was here that he initiated his extremely valuable activities in the field of spiritual literature and began to write his *Ascetic Works*. Because of illness, he was released in 1847 to the St. Nicholas-Babaevsky Monastery in the Diocese of Kostroma, where he penned

spiritually edifying letters to various persons. In 1856 he undertook a trip to Optina, with the aim of arranging a long-sought-for withdrawal to silence and seclusion, but he was required to return to St. Petersburg, where on October 27 of the following year, he was solemnly consecrated in the Kazan Cathedral as Bishop of the Caucasus and the Black Sea, with his cathedral in Stavropol.

Here he labored greatly on behalf of this large diocese, and was especially concerned for the education of youth. It was here that he wrote his famous work, *An Offering to Contemporary Monasticism—The Arena*. In 1861 he was retired

because of ill health to the St. Nicholas-Babaevsky Monastery, where he reposed on April 30, 1867.

The works of Bishop Ignatius were published in Russian in six volumes, the first three being *Ascetic Works*; Vol. IV: *Ascetic Sermons and Letters to Laymen*; Vol. V: *The Arena*; Vol. VI: *Patericon*.

The great significance of Bishop Ignatius' works lies in their simple and easily understood presentation, in a contemporary idiom and in a vivid, literary and artistic form, of all the most valuable patristic truths on the spiritual and ethical life of a Christian.

Translated by Timothy Fisher from vol. I of the *Ascetic Works (Experiences)* by Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1957, pp. 6–7.





Bishop Ignatius Briantchaninov

THE VISION OF CHRIST

Orthodox Life, 1950 (1), p. 5–7

DO YOU WISH to see the Lord Jesus Christ? **Come and see**, says His Apostle (Jn. 1, 46).

Our Lord Jesus Christ has promised to be with His Disciples **till the end of the world** (Mat. 28, 20). He is with them, in the Holy Gospel and in the Sacraments of the Church. ✠ He is not for those who do not believe in the Gospel; they do not see Him, being blinded by unbelief.

Do you wish to hear Christ? He speaks to you by the Gospel. Do not despise His saving voice. Turn from the life of sin, and listen attentively to the teaching of Christ, which is eternal life.

Do you want Christ to manifest Himself to you? He teaches you to merit it. **He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him** (Jn. 14, 21).

You were made a child of God by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism; you were brought into union with God by the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Maintain your sonship, maintain your union. Renew the purity given by Holy Baptism by repentance, and strengthen your union with God by receiving the Holy Mysteries as frequently as possible. **He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood**, says the Lord, **dwells in Me and I in him** (Jn. 6, 56).

Beware of reveries and day-dreaming, which can make you think that you see the Lord Jesus Christ, that you touch and embrace Him. This is an empty display of puffed up, proud self-opinion! This is perilous self-deception! Fulfil the commandments of the Lord, and in a wonderful way you will see the Lord within you, in your character and conduct. That is how the holy Apostle Paul saw the Lord within him. And he required this vision of all Christians. Those who had not got it, he called

people who had not reached the state proper to Christians, (ep. Gal. 6, 2–4; Ephes. 4; 5, 1–6).

If you like a sinful life and indulge your passions, and at the same time think that you love the Lord Jesus Christ, then His intimate disciple who lay on His breast during the mystical supper convicts you of self-deception. He says: **He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in Him. But who ever keeps His word, in him the love of God has really reached perfection.** (1 Jn. 2, 4–5).

If you do your sinful will, and so break the commandments of the Gospel, the Lord Jesus Christ will number you among these who do not love him. **He who does not love Me, He says, will not keep My words** (Jn. 14, 24).

Do not rush thoughtlessly to the marriage of the Son of God and to union with Him in old, stinking rags, without looking carefully to your garments, even though you are called to this marriage, to which every Christian is called. The Master of the house has servants who will bind you hand and foot, and will cast you into the outer darkness, away from the presence of God (Mat. 22, 11–13).

The servants to whose power the daring seeker of love is delivered are demons, fallen angels; the outer darkness is the gloom or blindness of the soul; the binding of the hands and feet denotes the loss of interior life and capacity for spiritual progress. All self-deluded people are in this state.

Can one who is in a state of self-delusion, in the realm of falsehood and deception, be a deer of Christ's commandments.

Such will be your state, wretched dreamers, who imagine that you are living your earthly life in the divine embraces, when the Saviour's word strikes

✠ St. Peter of Damascus says: “Christ is hidden in the Gospel. He who wishes to find Him must sell all his possessions and buy the Gospel, so as not seek Him not without but within oneself, that is, he should seek to be in body only to find Christ by reading, but so as to receive Him within oneself by imitating His life in the world. He who seeks Christ, says St. Maximus, should and soul like Christ, sinless far as humanly possible.”

you: **I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of iniquity** (Mat. 7, 23).

My true friend in the Lord! Go to the Lord Jesus Christ, draw near to Him by way of the commandments of the Gospel; know Him by them; show and prove your love for the Lord Jesus by putting them into practice. He Himself will manifest Himself to you, and with this manifestation He will pour into your heart unutterable love for Himself which is something which does not properly belong to

fallen man; it is the gift of the Holy Spirit, sent by God solely to vessels of humility and chastity (Rom. 5, 5).

Entrust yourself to the Lord, and not to yourself—that is far safer! He is your Creator. When you were subjected to the bitter fall, He took humanity for you, He gave you His Divinity. And what else has He not done for you? Prepare yourself for His gifts by purifying yourself; [II. Cor. 7. 1.] that is your business. Amen.



Fasting is a great thing, but love is even greater. If, through fasting, demons are cast out, passions tamed, the body pacified, and the spirit steadied; then, through love, God takes up His abode in man. The Lord Himself emphasized fasting as necessary, but stressed love as the main commandment. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Jeladin Bey ruled in Ohrid—a renegade from the Sultan and an independent ruler. At that time, the Church was governed by Metropolitan Callinicus. Even though of different faiths, Jeladin Bey and Callinicus were very good friends, and they often visited one another. It happened that Jeladin Bey condemned twenty-five Christians to be hanged. They were on Great and Holy Friday. completely disturbed by and began to implore scheduled to be hanged. The metropolitan, this, went to Jeladin Bey him to be more lenient with the sentence. While they were conversing, the time for lunch arrived and the bey invited the metropolitan to dine. Lamb had been prepared for lunch. The metropolitan excused himself, saying that because of the fast he could not remain for lunch, and he prepared to leave. The bey was sorry and said to the metropolitan: "Choose-either you dine with me and free twenty-five men from the gallows, or you do not dine and allow them to be hanged." The metropolitan crossed himself and sat down to eat, and Jeladin freed the condemned from the punishment of death.



Hieromonk Seraphim Rose

Great Orthodox Hierarchs of the 19th & 20th Centuries

SAINT JOHN (SERGIEFF) OF KRONSTADT

The Orthodox Word, 1965, Vol. 1, No. 1, January-February, p. 32–34

ON OCTOBER 19 (November 1), 1964, in the Cathedral dedicated to the icon of the Mother of God of the Sign in New York City, the bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia solemnly canonized a new Saint of the Orthodox Church: St. John of Kronstadt. This Saint, who died only in 1908 after a long life of service to the Church as a parish priest and spiritual guide of the faithful, was famous already in his own lifetime for the abundance of Divine grace which was manifested through him, particularly in miraculous healings of the sick. He continued to work miracles after his death, and among devout Russians of the emigration he has long been revered as a saint. His canonization, the first one which the Russian Orthodox Church has performed in the difficult years since the Revolution, came in answer to this popular veneration, and also to the conviction of the bishops, shared by many believers, that the time was now ripe for this act.

This great Saint has had a special part to play in the life of the Orthodox Russian people. He was a prophet who foresaw the fall of the Russian Empire and the exile of the Russian faithful. Seeing the spiritual cause of this fall in the worldliness and lack of living faith that were so widespread in the last period of the Empire, he called Orthodox faithful to repentance and renewed awareness of their Christian vocation and responsibility. His appeal is still heard today, and if the Orthodox Russian people dispersed in exile throughout the world are still one people—even if only a faithful remnant—and still true to Holy Orthodoxy, it is in part due to his still-living example and his holy prayers.

The significance of St. John for the Russian people is therefore unquestioned. But there is

something extraordinary about his canonization: it occurred not in Russia but in America. For believing Russians, to be sure, there is nothing unusual about this. The Russian land is enslaved, and the largest number of believers as well as the seat of the Synod of Bishops of the free Russian Orthodox Church are now located in America; as often in the past, so now the recognition of a universal Russian Saint begins on a regional level, his open acknowledgement by the whole Russian people being necessarily deferred to an indefinite future. For non-Russians, however, it is his broader significance that is of interest.

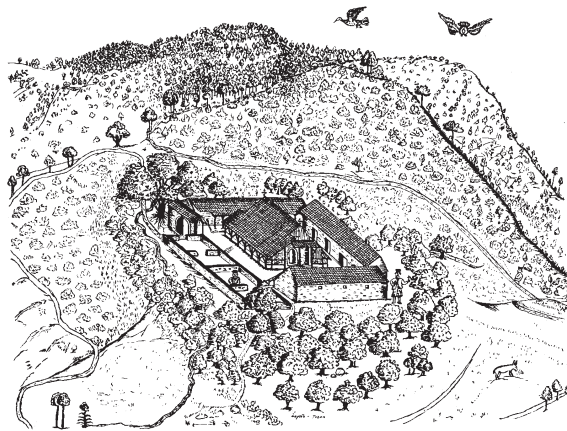
Up to this time, one might say, St. John has belonged to the Orthodox Russian people; but now, while remaining the spiritual patron of the suffering Russian people, he has become a Saint of the universal Orthodox Church of Christ, and his holy example of a life in Christ has been held up for the whole world to see. It is no accident that his canonization has taken place outside of Russia; he himself foresaw that the Russian people would be dispersed abroad and that Orthodox churches would be erected throughout the world as a testimony of Christian Truth before the unbelieving world. To this unbelieving world, in all the languages in which his words have been and will yet be translated, he now speaks the same message that he spoke to the Russian people in his own lifetime.

This, perhaps, is what lies before us if we do not return to the path of righteous Christian life. There are many who would object that such thoughts, as well as thoughts of the Second Coming of Christ and the terrible Last Judgment, which St. John believed might well be at hand, are too “negative.”

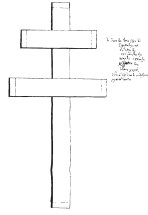
But if our response to these thoughts and warnings is right, if it is Christian, we will be filled, not with fear and terror, but with tearful repentance, with zeal to lead a truly Christian life, with trust in our Lord Who is with us in all our trials, even to martyrdom itself (and especially then), and with fervent hope in the Kingdom of Heaven which is our true home, and no mere earthly dwelling.

It is to nothing but simple and profound Christian faith that St. John recalls us. In an age when too many pastors preach a “new Christianity” that is only worldliness in disguise, his is a rare and much needed voice—not for Russians alone, not for Orthodox Christians alone, but for the whole world, if it will but listen.

HOLY SAINT OF CHRIST, JOHN OF KRONSTADT, PRAY TO GOD FOR US.



At one time the fables of the heretics plagued the Church of God, and now the Church is plagued by the fables of the apostates from God. By perseverance in the Faith, by diligence in prayer, by confession of the Faith, and even by martyrdom for the Faith, the Church has remained undefeated. Only by these methods will these new plagues be defeated. The Church of God, the Vessel of Divine Truth, will triumph in the end: The swords of the enemy have utterly failed (Psalm 9:6). Blessed Clement of Alexandria, speaking about heretics who left the Church, said: "He who has fallen into heresy travels through an arid desert, abandoning the One True God. Alienated from God, he seeks water in dry places, he gathers barren fruit with his hands, and enters into an uninhabited and thirsty land." This also can be said today about the many theoreticians and inventors of scientific hypotheses who are led by their imaginations and not by the truth of God.



I. M. Kontsevich

SAINT JOHN OF KRONSTADT AND THE SPIRITUAL CRISIS OF RUSSIA



The Orthodox Word, 1965, Vol.1, No. 2, March-April, p. 43–57

—I/II—

While several articles on the life and spirituality of this newly-canonized Saint of the Orthodox Church have now appeared in English, the following is the first to trace the spiritual tradition of which he was a part and to place him in historical perspective. The author, a graduate of St. Sergius Academy in Paris and a noted Russian theologian, wrote The Acquisition of the Holy Spirit in Ancient Russia and is currently writing a book on the Startsi of Optina.

INTRODUCTION

Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.

St. Matt. 12:25

NEVER BEFORE HAS so much been spoken and written † about any of the saints or righteous men as about Father John of Kronstadt. For this reason we shall set ourselves the task, not so much of painting a complete picture of him—for this is well known to us all—as of characterizing his epoch and elucidating the historical significance of the person of Father John. We shall touch only in part on him himself and his works.

Father John lived at the time when the spiritual crisis which Russia was undergoing was reaching its high point: a fatal bifurcation reigned in all spheres of life in the Empire. On one side, the spiritual revival in the ascetic tradition which began in the 19th century and embraced believing Russians,

was sending out its abundant shoots; on the other side, the overwhelming majority of society was in the grasp of an opposing current of atheistic and revolutionary activity foreign to the Russian people, coming from the West.

Father John was entirely a product of the movement of spiritual revival, he was entirely in its spirit and light; and the wave of this revival raised Father John to the very height of its crest. The Lord placed high upon a candlestand this His brightly-burning lamp.

The other wave of godlessness and destruction, the wave of the spirit of antichrist, raised to its height Lev Tolstoy, who indeed became its

† i.e., in Russian; the reader should keep in mind throughout that the article was originally addressed to Russians (trans. note)

generally-acknowledged prophet. Father John rose up powerfully and sternly against the enemies of the Church and the government, unceasingly accusing them, calling to repentance, warning of

Divine chastisement. It was in this that his prophetic calling and office lay. We shall pass now to a more detailed consideration of our subject.

I - FATHER JOHN IN THE SPIRIT AND POWER OF THE HOLY FATHERS

I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?
St. Luke 12:49

THE PATH TO HOLINESS

AFTER THE REFORMS of Peter the Great and those that followed them, directed against monasticism, there came an epoch of decline in Russian monasticism; but already in the 19th century a spiritual revival is to be noted. For this the foundation was laid by Archimandrite Paisy Velichkovsky: beginning in the second half of the 18th century he occupied himself with translations from Greek into Slavonic of the ascetic works of the holy Fathers (the *Philokalia*) and revived in his monastery in Moldavia the ascetic tradition of the ancient Near East. In this ascetic tradition, the center of gravity lay not in external but in internal ascetic endeavor (*podvig*), namely in overcoming the “old man,” in attaining passionlessness. Immediate encounter with God—the acquisition of the Holy Spirit—was the final end of all ascetic endeavors. In connection with this there was reestablished the system of spiritual direction by elders (*startsî*).

The revival of monasticism in Russia is connected also with the name of Gabriel, Metropolitan of St. Petersburg. In 1793 he published the *Philokalia*; besides that he appointed the students of Paisy as rectors of many Russian monasteries, and they also reintroduced into monastic ascetic discipline the ancient tradition which had been almost forgotten in Russia before this

In this period of revival a throng of holy ascetics appeared. To the early period belongs one of the greatest saints—St. Seraphim of Sarov (1759–1833). St. Seraphim was directed to Sarov by Starets Dosifei, who had a spiritual connection with Paisy Velichkovsky. Dosifei commanded St. Seraphim to perform unceasingly the Jesus Prayer. In the Sarov forest St. Seraphim practiced the ascetic life together with Fr. Mark and Abbot Nazary, who in his time had been called by Metropolitan

Gabriel to Petersburg as advisor in the correction of obscure passages in the Slavonic translation of the *Philokalia*, being chosen for his personal knowledge of the spiritual life. One must presume that Fr. Nazary took the *Philokalia* to Sarov. “The gift of holiness which St. Seraphim possessed,”—as the well-known Church historian Kartashev has said,—“like ‘every gift from above,’ came ‘from the Father of Lights,’ while the personal attainments of the Saint came from that vivifying stream of the Russian ascetic revival, along which the Saint formed the desire to conduct the ship of his life.”

Father John Sergiev was born in 1829, not long before the death of St. Seraphim, and, like him, he formed the desire to conduct the ship of his life along the same luminous and abundant current of spiritual revival. We do not know who among the clergy was especially close to Fr. John while he was studying in the Academy, or who his confessor was. Or were his teachers books alone? One may positively state that at that period there was no scarcity of experienced ascetic-directors; they could be found anywhere. Likewise one ascetic work after another began to appear in print. That was the time of the full bloom of the spiritual revival.

At about this time the students of the followers of Starets Paisy became concentrated primarily at Optina Monastery, which became a spiritual center and was made famous by its clairvoyant startsî and its works of enlightenment. Beginning in 1847 a group of professors and writers, under the direction of Starets Makary, translated from Greek and published works of the holy Fathers. Their activity—the dissemination of patristic literature—coincided with the academic years of Fr. John (1851–55) and the first years of his priesthood.

At the same time near Petersburg Archimandrite Ignaty Brianchaninov (1807–1867) was serving as rector in the Sergieva Hermitage which he had reestablished. His was the attractive and fascinating figure of a true ascetic. At the beginning of the reign of Nicholas I he graduated from the College of Military Engineering at the head of his class, being one of the Empress' scholarship students and a favorite of the Emperor; but he preferred monastic endeavor to the brilliant worldly career that lay open before him.

Archimandrite Ignaty was a student of the Optina starets Lev (Leonid) and author of the *Ascetic Works* in which, basing himself on the teaching of the holy Fathers, he set forth the path of the "interior activity"¹ and cautioned against deception. As a writer Archimandrite Ignaty had command of a rare literary talent and a poetic gift. Already while Fr. John was a priest in Kronstadt, to be precise in 1858, Archimandrite Ignaty was consecrated bishop and left for Stavropol. After him the rector at Sergieva Hermitage² was Archimandrite Ignaty Malyshev, his favorite student, who received the spirit of his teacher. The connection of Fr. John with Sergieva Hermitage in his youth is known, and it did not cease afterwards: on the death of Fr. Ignaty Malyshev in 1898 Fr. John read for him the prayer on the departure of the soul.

Another outstanding contemporary of Fr. John was Bishop Theophan Vyshensky (the Recluse, 1811–1894), who worked about 20 years (1873–1890) on the Russian translation of the *Philokalia* and through his writings and letters guided the believing part of his generation. While still a hieromonk he was an inspector at the Saint Petersburg Academy. This was between 1856 and 1858, that is, after Fr. John's residence there. When Fr. Theophan, on his return from the Holy Land, became rector of the Academy, he was too late to find Fr. John there. Thus it is possible that they never met face to face.

Nonetheless it is known that Bp. Theophan later, from his seclusion, warned Fr. John about the dangers of the path he had chosen: to be a healer of the sick outside the walls of a monastery, without the monastic experience and obedience.

This exceptional path, however, was not chosen by Fr. John arbitrarily. Illarion, a contemporary of St. Seraphim, while leading the ascetic life in the Reshminsky Hermitage started him on this path through the staritsa Paraskeva Ivanovna Kovrigina. Fr. Illarion told her: "The time has come for you to leave your home and set out on the path of good. Go to Kronstadt; there a new light of the Church of Christ has begun to shine—Fr. John! Go and serve

him! My blessing will be with you." According to Fr. John's own words this staritsa persuaded him to pray for healing of the sick.

Although Fr. John served as a priest in the world and was not a monk, his inner life was entirely one of monastic asceticism, in accordance with the traditions of the holy Fathers. He constantly spoke of the interior spiritual activity, of the "unseen warfare"—not only against the passions, but also against "the subcelestial spirits of evil," of "the prayer of the heart" and the power and efficacy of the "Name of Jesus." He related in detail his own spiritual activity in his "Conversation" of Dec. 12, 1900, on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of his ordination as priest. Here he touched on the first steps of the path of his spiritual warfare. But self-examination, knowledge of himself, constant prayer,—these were the occupation of his whole life to the very end. The most profound humility was his shield and visor: "In my body I am earth and ashes, but my soul lives and rests only in God. He is the lucidity of my thoughts and the strength of my heart; I myself am nothing."

Here is what Fr. John says of himself in the above-mentioned "Conversation." "Once ordained a priest and pastor, I soon learned through experience with whom I had entered into combat in my spiritual arena, namely with the powerful, cunning, unsleeping prince of this world, who breathes evil and perdition and the fire of hell, and with the subcelestial spirits of evil... This battle with the strong and cunning invisible enemy plainly showed me how many infirmities, weaknesses, and sinful passions there were in me,—how strong a hold the prince of this world had over me, and how I had to struggle hard with myself, with my sinful inclinations and habits, and conquer them, so as to be as far as possible invulnerable to the arrows of the enemy.

"The spiritual warfare began, and with it watchfulness over oneself, the sharpening of spiritual sight, teaching oneself uninterrupted secret prayer and the invocation of the All-saving Name of Christ; like the Psalmist, the Prophet-king David, I have come constantly to lift up the heart's "eyes unto the hills"—to heaven, from whence has come to me manifest, quick, powerful "help" (Ps. 103:1-3), and my mighty enemies have been put to flight while I have obtained freedom and peace of soul...

"This warfare has continued within me up to now; and the long period of spiritual warfare has given me much and especially experienced knowledge of all the subtleties of the spiritual warfare, of all the innumerable wiles of the invisible enemies and

1 I.e., the practice of the Jesus Prayer (trans. note).

2 Sergieva Hermitage is situated near the city of Oranienbaum, which is on the road from Kronstadt to Petersburg. (It was here where Father Herman of Alaska had first entered monasticism. Trans. note.)

¹ Archpriest M. Pomazansky, "St. Simeon the New Theologian and Fr. John of Kronstadt on the Church and Grace," in *The Orthodox Path* (in Russian), Jordanville, N.Y., 1957

² Catholic scholars have established that Nicholas Cabasilas was not Archbishop of Thessalonica, as historians have previously considered him to be; the Orthodox scholar Archimandrite Cyprian (Kern) calls Cabasilas Metropolitan of Dirrachys.

the firm, always certain invocation of the Name of the Lord Jesus, before which they cannot stand. In this unseen warfare I have come to know the perpetual nearness to me of the Lord, His immeasurable goodness, His quick hearing, the infinite holiness of His being, for which "an unrighteous thought is abomination" (Proverbs 15:26), as is a single momentary desire for sin, or pleasure in sin; the holiness of God irrevocably and unfailingly seeks and asks of all of us holiness in our thoughts, holy fervor in our feelings, holiness in every movement of our will, in our words, in our deeds. In this warfare I have come to know the immensity of God's long-suffering to us; for He alone knows all the infirmity of our fallen nature, which He mercifully took upon Himself, except for sin (I Peter 2:22; Isaiah 53:9; I John 3:5, 4:10; Hebrews 4:15), and therefore He commanded us "seventy times seven" times to forgive the sins (St. Matt. 18: 22) of those who have fallen into them; and He has surrounded and continues to surround me every day with the joys of salvation from sin in peace and expansion of the heart. The Divine mercy which I have experienced and the perpetual nearness to me of the Lord confirm me in the hope of my eternal salvation and in that of those who follow and hear me to salvation, according to the word of the Scriptures, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me" (Hebrews 2:13; Isaiah 8:18).

Subsequently Fr. John speaks of how, "serving in full splendor marvellous Divine services and receiving daily the most holy and life-giving sacrament," he felt within himself "its life-givingness for soul and body, its victory over sin and death, justification, peace, freedom, boldness of spirit." Thus, through the interior activity and "daily concentrated and reverent service of the Liturgy," Fr. John mounted from strength to strength and became worthy of ever greater gifts of the Holy Spirit.

According to the word of the Apostle: "... for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12), "... God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps..." (I Cor. 12:28). All these gifts, as we know, were poured out in abundance on Fr. John, and they testify to his holiness. In this brief sketch we will not touch on his clairvoyance, his working of miracles, or the innumerable healings he performed, but will pass on to his works, about which we will say a few words.

In his works Fr. John was inspired by the primary Orthodoxy of the holy Fathers.

Orthodoxy is not an abstract philosophy, nor a doctrine of human intellect, yet it is founded on the Gospel; it is not merely a particular form of worship, or rite, dogma, way of life, —but the living bond with God, authentic life in the Holy Spirit, in the Church which is nothing else than the truth of the Gospel, opened to us by the Divinely-inspired works of the holy Fathers and the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils. The Church of which Christ Himself is the head and which is directed here on earth by hierarchs who are successors of the Apostles, is the Mystical Body of Christ, in which the Holy Spirit forms, vivifies, gathers together, and unites all. In her all is harmoniously and organically bound together as in a living organism: thus theology and asceticism, spirituality and podvig, are inseparable. Dogma conditions asceticism, and inversely, in ascetic practice dogma reveals itself.

Thus the theology contained in Fr. John's works flows directly from his ascetic practice. It is theocentric and appears as a rebirth of the spirit of the ancient holy Fathers. A theology of this sort, joined to personal holiness, is born of inspiration from above and is distinguished by its character from the theological constructions of the scientific mind. Fr. John taught only what he knew from personal experience, and his education and knowledge only broadened his mental horizon and made it possible for him to find forms of expression.

The works of Fr. John are free from the Western influences of humanism or moralism. Being himself a living vessel of the Holy Spirit, he drank from the same source from which the holy Fathers had drunk and thus threw out a bridge from the ancient spirit-bearing epoch to our time. Those closest to him were not his contemporaries, but such fathers and teachers as John Chrysostom (4th c.) or Simeon the New Theologian (10th c.),¹ and also the author of *On Life in Christ*, Nicholas Cabasilas (14th c.).

If the diary of Fr. John's mystical experience—*My Life in Christ*—may be compared to a pile of multi-colored gems, the book of Cabasilas, *On Life in Christ*, is an unbroken golden chain of equal, interconnected links of logical arguments which flow one from another. It is a harmonious philosophical system

Metropolitan² Nicholas Cabasilas (d. 1371) took in his youth an active part in the political and court life of the stormy epoch under the Paleologues and the Cantacuzcnes. He participated in the famous hesychast controversy and was on the side of Gregory Palamas, whom he revered. His treatise on *The Chatter of Nicephorus Gregoras* (preserved

in manuscript) testifies to his negative attitude toward the opponents of hesychasm.

Nicholas Cabasilas was an outstanding ecclesiastical writer. His chief works were *On Life in Christ* and *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*.

The first of these was translated from German into Russian by the priest M. Bogolyubsky and published in 1874 in St. Petersburg. The second was included in the collection of *Writings of the Holy Fathers and Teachers of the Church Relating to Commentary on the Divine Services*, Vol. 3, St. Petersburg, 1857; † in manuscript it is preserved in the National Library in Paris, in a handwritten copy made by the Anthonite monk Ioasaf—the former Emperor John Cabtaczene, who on the title-page names his friend “the most wise, most learned, and holy among the holy.”

Catholic scholars speak of *On Life in Christ* thus: “It is full of material from the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers, and all is bound into a precise doctrine by a powerful speculative mind, subject to a serene piety. Simeon of Thessalonica, the best of succeeding liturgists, made use of him and imitated him, but with less talent and endowment.” One must presume that Fr. John was acquainted with these works of Metropolitan Nicholas Cabasilas; they are in harmony with his own spirit.

Nicholas Cabasilas develops the idea that the Christian should already in this perishing world begin the life which attains perfection only after death. Life consists of union with Christ and is accomplished through the sacraments: “Only under the action of the sacraments may organs be developed for the apprehension of spiritual life, and it is they that will make it possible on Judgment Day for one to enter into communion with Christ.”

In the first chapter of Cabasilas’ work is a concise discussion of the sacraments: Baptism, Chrismation, the Eucharist. Among the sacraments he singles out the Eucharist; one can always find parallel passages in Fr. John’s works.

It is well-known that Fr. John, like Cabasilas, spoke about the Eucharist more than about anything else; *My Life in Christ* is entirely penetrated and animated by a liturgical point of view. “As far as is known to us from the history of the Church,” as one writer has said, “never has anyone so rapturously

served, loved, adored, and praised the Divine Liturgy as did Fr. John of Kronstadt. It is doubtful if even John Chrysostom, that great teacher of the Church, was so enraptured by the Liturgy, spoke so much of it, or so much drew men to it by his own rapture and by his words, as blessed Fr. John.” He spoke thus: “That the Lord is always with us is clearly proved to anyone who serves His Divine, life-giving Mysteries: here He allows us to touch Him, to put the hands of our heart into His nail-wounds and to put our fingers into His side.”

Having given a general idea of the meaning of the sacraments in his first chapter, Cabasilas in the following chapters discusses each of them separately and devotes the last two chapters: the sixth, to the means, drawn from the sacraments, whereby the life in Christ may be maintained; and the seventh, to the transfiguration of the soul that is accomplished under the action of the sacraments.

Let us quote several indicative passages, which testify to the affinity of soul of two Orthodox theologians who were separated from each other by six centuries.

Speaking of how “here on earth the spiritual life consists of the most intimate union with Christ,” Cabasilas clarifies the intimacy of this union. He says: “In the Scriptures there are indicated allegories or parables of this union: now a house and its inhabitants, again a vine and branches, now head and members, again a marriage; but none of them is equal to this union, for it cannot be expressed in words, since it is much stronger than the bond which is cited in any allegory.”

Fr. John repeats over and over in poetic images: “God is my being, my breath, my light, my strength...” “Consider how great is man,” he says;

† *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* has recently appeared in an English translation by J. M. Hussey and P. A. McNulty, published in London by the S.P.C.K., 1960 (trans. note)



“God dwells in him and he in God,” so that in a pious Christian there lives not merely a man, but Christ Himself: “Yet not I live, but Christ liveth in me (Gal. 2: 20), because the whole soul becomes of Christ, as iron on burning coals becomes all fiery, becoming itself like burning coals,—all is fire, all is light, all is warmth!”

Cabasilas further explains that Christ in the spiritual life is “All in all”: “Being feeder, He is at the same time food; He provides the bread of life, and is Himself what He provides. He is life for the living, peace for those who breathe, clothing for those who desire to be clothed. By Him alone can

we walk, and He is also the Path, and what is more a resting-place on the path, and its end.”

“How near to us has the Lord come through the Incarnation,” says Fr. John; “we eat and drink Him, breathe Him, are clothed in Him! —Oh, what a marvellous clothing, excellent, incorruptible, most peaceful, sweet, bright, warm, strengthening the soul...” “The Divine Liturgy is in truth a heavenly service on earth, during which God Himself in a special, most near and intimate way, is present and dwells with men, be-*ing* Himself the unseen Celebrator, offering and being offered.”

“MY LIFE IN CHRIST”

FR. JOHN’S WORK, *My Life in Christ*, is the diary of a contemplative, notations of illuminations and revelations, the prayerful striving of a soul to God and a real meeting with Him: “The eyes of the Master in the Temple of God are turned to each of us,” said Fr. John; “the heart of the Master is turned to each of us! Can one ask for greater nearness? When you stand at prayer weighed down by many sins and overcome with despair, begin to pray with hope and with a fervent spirit, call to mind that the Spirit of God Himself assists us in our infirmities, interceding for us with inexpressible sighings. When you call to mind with faith this action of the Spirit of God in us, tears of tender feeling will flow from your eyes and you will feel in your heart peace, sweetness, justification, and joy in the Holy Spirit, you will cry with the voice of your heart: Abba, Father.”

Fr. John spoke with inspiration of the Church, both as eternal Truth and as the Body of Christ, and thus of her uniqueness and the unity in her of all members through Christ: “The Church is the eternal Truth, because it is united to Christ the Truth and animated by the Spirit of Truth. ‘I am with you always’ (St. Matt. 28:20); the Church is His Body, as the Apostle says.”

“‘I am the Vine,’ said the Lord, ‘ye are the branches’ (St. John 15: 5), i.e., the one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. Thus just as the Lord is holy, so is the Church holy; just as the Lord is ‘the Way, the Truth, and the Life’ (St. John 14:6), so too is the Church, because the Church is one with the Lord, she is ‘His body, of His flesh, and of His bones’ (Eph. 5:30), or His branches, rooted in Him the living Vine and taking nourishment from Him and growing in Him. Never imagine the Church as separate from the Lord Jesus Christ, from the Father and the Holy Spirit.”

Fr. John returned to the patristic understanding of the Church as life in the sacraments; the mystery of the Church is revealed in the Holy Eucharist, in which is the concentration of Christian existence:

“The Liturgy is spirit and life; its idea: “that all may be one” (St. John 17:21) in Christ; one must carry everyone in one’s heart, pray sincerely for all. Man, as the image of God, is immeasurably loved by God; man is the fallen image of God, restored by the extreme suffering for him of the Son of God. Thanks to the Holy Trinity, who has saved us! Man is continually restored, renewed, saved by the most pure Body and Blood of Christ, the deified. The Liturgy is the greatest miracle of the goodness and mercy of the omnipotent Lord God, a constant miracle: we should always be present at its performance, with joy and fear, with love for God and one another. During the Liturgy heavenly power are always invisibly serving.

Fr. John calls all to *simplicity*, to the restoration of *the integrity of the personality*.

Before his fall Adam was entirely concentrated interiorly by the Divine grace present in him and turned in his creative activity toward God in perfect love for Him and in fulfillment of His Divine will. He was entirely in a state of communion with and contemplation of God. In him all manifestation of the tripartite composition of the human being (i.e., spirit, soul, and body) were harmoniously united and hierarchically subordinated to the higher principle in man—his spirit. The spirit ruled over all, turning all toward a single higher aim. The first-created man was entirely penetrated with the grace of the Holy Spirit and entirely illuminated. The elements of the world could not harm man, and he was immortal.

Sin—this sting of death—brought into human existence the poison of ruin and decomposition. The Divine grace which had protected him and collected him into one, now left him. Then all the powers of the soul came into disorder and contradiction: body rose up against spirit—the slave against its lord. Thus was the order of the soul deformed and there arose the distorted man—the man of sin.

Passion is something new, introduced from without, the striving of previous qualities and capacities away from the right toward the wrong. Thus, a higher manifestation of the spirit—its capacity for striving upward, to God—when it lost communion with the Divinity turned downward and changed into Jove for oneself and for everything lower and created.

The aim of asceticism is the restoration of the lost integrity of the personality. “The chief characteristic of the religious mind,” as I. V. Kireyevsky † has said, basing himself on the Fathers, “consists of striving to collect all the powers of the soul into one powder. One must seek that inner concentration of existence, where reason and will, feeling and conscience, goodness and truth, wonder and desire, justice and mercy, and the whole orientation of the mind are poured together into a single living unity, and thus the essential personality of man is restored in its original indivisibility, which is manifested in simplicity; for simplicity is the consequence of the unity of all the powers of the human soul, of this integrity of the personality and striving toward the good and complete turning away from evil.”

Of simplicity Fr. John spoke constantly. Its principle is in God:

“The uniquely simple Spirit in three Hypostases, the unique Wisdom in three Persons, has brought all from non-existence into existence. The unique tri-hypostatic Wisdom is God.”

“Love without reflection: love is simple. Love never errs. In the same way without reflection believe and hope: for faith and hope are that simple. Or even better: God, in Whom we believe and on Whom we hope, is simple Being in the same way that He is simple Love. Amen.”

“The Lord is so holy, so simple in His Holiness, that a single evil or impure thought deprives us of God the sweet and most sweet, pure and most pure peace and light of our souls. Hence the saints are all light, all one fragrance, like the light of the

sun, like the purest air. Lord, grant me this simple holiness.”

“In prayer and in every action of your life flee suspiciousness and doubt and diabolical imaginings. May the eye of your soul be simple, so that it may illuminate all your prayer, all your deeds, and your whole life.”

“Our soul is simple, like thought, and swift, like thought and like lightning.”

“Call without doubting, in the simplicity of your heart, on the Lord God, and on the angels and saints, who by Divine grace and by communion or union with God and by the simplicity of their being are extraordinarily swift, like lightning, and hear and fulfill our prayers in accordance with the will of God.”

“...May we be simple, may we walk in simplicity of heart with everyone! Let us remember our high calling and chosenness, and may we unswervingly strive toward the honor of our higher Divine calling in Christ. We are the children of God, and heirs of Christ” (Rom. 8 :16, 17). “Our soul is a simple being, and thus it cannot at one and the same time love both God and, for example, money” (St. Luke 16: 13, St. Matt. 6:24).

“Our soul is a simple being, as the image and likeness of God... And so, do always the will of God and you will be simple and at peace.”

“Try to attain to the simplicity of a child in your dealings with men and in prayer to God. Simplicity is man’s greatest good and dignity. God is completely simple, because He is completely spiritual, completely good. And may your own soul not be divided between good and evil.”

From simplicity flows *unity in love*. This unity of all rational beings is rooted in God. God by nature is one, and all that is in God is one with Him. Fr. John said: “Just as the Trinity, our God, is one Being, although also three Persons, so should we too be one. As our God is simple, so should we too be simple, as simple as if we were all one man, one mind, one will, one heart, one goodness without the least admixture of evil—in other words, one pure love, as God is Love. ‘That they may be one, even as We are one’ ” (St. John 17: 22).

“God is He Who is. In Him all holy, rational, and free creatures are one. ‘As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us.’ I am nothing: God is everything in me and God is in everyone, and for everyone God is everything. ‘Our

† A Russian philosopher of the 19th century who assisted Starets Makary of Optina in editing and publishing Starets Paisy Velichkovsky’s translations of the Fathers (trans. note).

Father, Who art in heaven.' Pay no attention to the disturbances, divisions, and enmity of the demons. Repeat: all is one. Say: we are one."

We are members of the one Body of Christ—the Church, from whence is our unity, which is effectively realized in the Eucharist: "How long," asks Fr. John, "will the holy Mysteries which we receive remind us that 'we being many ate one body' (I Cor. 10:17), and yet there will be no heartfelt natural union among us, as members of the one Body of Christ?.."

Calling all to unity, Fr. John showed that the cause of divisions is sin and the passions: "Attain unity, oh man," he said, "in every way flee the spiritual division that comes through self-love, pride, envy, love of money, doubt, small faith... Union is God. Division is the devil. Church divisions are the work of the devil; heresy and schism are the work of the devil."

These profound thoughts of Fr. John concerning unity have a special meaning in our decadent age when faith and love have grown weak and as a consequence there have arisen church quarrels and schisms. These have been possible only because we have completely lost the understanding of the Church as the unique Mystical Body of Christ, and we have forgotten that apostasy from it draws with it a doom similar to that which a branch suffers when it is cut off from the tree, for thus the current of grace is stopped.

According to St. John Chrysostom, the whole responsibility for schism is borne not only by its perpetrators, or by the hierarchs and clergy of the schismatic body, but also by all laymen who follow them, since they support the schism.

The second and last part of this essay, THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF FATHER JOHN, is a self-contained article in its own right; it will appear later this year in The Orthodox Word.

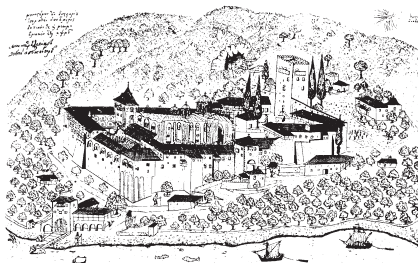
Not a few of the reflections scattered among the pages of Fr. John's diary are devoted to the mystery of holiness: "... For the saints, all is God, since the saints are true gods. 'I,' God Himself, Whose word is truth, 'have said, ye are gods' " (Ps 81: 6).

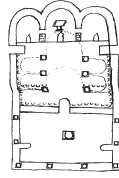
Many times Fr. John theologized on God the Word, and on the reality of the word: "Remember that in the word itself is contained also the possibility of the deed; one need only have firm faith in the power of the word, in its creative capacity. In God the deed is inseparable from the word; not one word will return to Him without power: 'No word from God shall be void of power' (St Luke 1:37). Thus it should be with us too, for we are images of the Word, and the Word has become most intimately united to us through the Incarnation, deifying us and accepting us as communicants of the Divine nature."

"Rational being! Remember that you have your beginning from the Word of the Creator of all and in union (through faith) with the creative Word; by means of faith you can yourself be a material and spiritual creator..."

"...If you ... speak the words of a prayer with feeling, your words will not return to you empty, powerless (like a shell without a kernel), but they will unfailingly bring you the very fruits that are contained in the word, like fruit in its integument! But if you waste words, scatter them without faith, without feeling their power, like a shell without the kernel, they will return to you just as empty. Throw out a husk, and the husk returns."

Fr. John touches on many other topics as well, but we will close with this and pass on to his prophetic office and the significance of this office as the Russian people's last warning and call to repentance by God before the terrible Divine chastisement.





Father John of Cronstadt

MY LIFE IN CHRIST

TRANSLATED BY E. E. GOULAEFF

Orthodox Life, 1950 (1), p. 27–36

PART I

“This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent”
St. John XVII. 3.

THOU, O, GOD, hast opened wide to me Thy truth and Thy verity. By instructing me in the sciences. Thou hast opened to me all the riches of faith, of nature, and of human understanding; I have learned Thy word—the Word of God—“piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.” [Hebrews IV 12] I have studied the laws regulating the mind of man, its love of wisdom, the formation and the beauty of speech; I have penetrated in part into the mysteries of Nature, into her laws, into the abyss of the creation of worlds and their revolution; I know the population of the terrestrial globe; I have acquainted myself with its different peoples, with the celebrated persons, and their works, who have passed in turn through this world; I have in part studied the great science of self-knowledge and of how to draw nigh to Thee; in a word, I have become cognizant of many, many things —“for more things are shewed unto thee than men understand,” [Sirach III 23] and hereafter I shall yet learn much. I have many books of very varied contents; I have read and re-read them, but still I am not yet satisfied. My spirit still thirsts for further knowledge and my heart is unsatisfied; it hungers, and from all the knowledge thus acquired by the intellect, it cannot gain full happiness. When will it be satisfied? It will be satisfied, when “I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness.” [Psalm XVII 15] Until then I shall hunger. “Whosoever drinketh of this water (of worldly

wisdom) shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life,” [St. John IV 13 and 14] said the Lord.

How is it that the saints see us and our needs and hear our prayers? Let us make the following comparison: Suppose that you were transplanted to the sun and were united to it. The sun lights the whole earth with its rays, it lights every particle of the earth. In these rays you also see the earth, but you are so small in proportion to the sun, that you would form, so to say, but one ray, and there are an infinite number of such rays. By its identity with the sun this ray takes an intimate part in lighting the whole world through the sun. So also the saintly soul, having become united to God, as to its spiritual sun, sees, through the medium of its spiritual sun, which lights the whole universe, all men and the needs of those that pray.

Have you learned to see God and represent Him to yourself—as the omnipresent Wisdom, as the living, acting Word, as the vivifying Holy Spirit? The Holy Scripture is the domain of Wisdom, Word and Spirit, of God in the Trinity; in it He clearly manifests Himself: “The Words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life,” [St. John VI 63] said the Lord. The writing of the Holy Fathers are again the expression of the Mind. Word and

Spirit of the Holy Trinity, in which the spirit of the higher class (spiritually speaking) of mankind has largely participated; the writings of ordinary worldly men are the expression of the fallen spirit of men, with all their sinful attachments, habits and passions. In the Holy Scriptures we see God face to face, and ourselves as we are. Man, know thyself through them, and walk always as in the presence of God.

As you are aware, man, in his words, does not die; he is immortal in them, and they will speak after his death. I shall die, but shall speak even after my death. How many immortal words are in use amongst the living, which were left by those who died long ago, and which sometimes still live in the mouths of a whole people! How powerful is the word even of an ordinary man! Still more so is the Word of God: it will live throughout all ages, and will always be living and acting.

As God is the creative, living and life-giving Wisdom, therefore those greatly sin who, by the thoughts of their spirit, turn aside from the Wisdom of the Trinity and occupy themselves with material, perishable things, thus materializing their spirit itself. Especially do those sin who, during Divine Service in church or during their prayers at home, entirely turn aside in their thoughts from God and allow their minds to wander in different places outside the church. By doing so they greatly offend God, upon Whom on such occasions our minds should be fixed.

To what end do fasting and penitence lead? For what purpose is this trouble taken? They lead to the cleansing of the soul from sins, to peace of heart, to union with God, they fill us with devotion and sonship, and give us boldness before God. There are, indeed, very important reasons for fasting and for confession from the whole heart. There shall be an inestimable reward given for conscientious labor. Have many of us the feeling of son-like love to God? Dare many of us, without condemnation and with boldness call upon the Father in Heaven and say: "Our Father!"... Is there not, on the contrary, no such sonlike voice to be heard in our hearts, which are deadened by the vanities of this world and attachments to its objects and pleasures? Is not our Heavenly Father far from our hearts? Is it not rather an avenging God that we should represent to ourselves, we who have withdrawn ourselves from Him into a far-away land? Yes, by our sins all of us are worthy of His righteous anger and punishment, and it is wonderful how long-suffering and forbearing He is to us—that He does not strike us like the barren fig trees. Let us hasten to propitiate Him by repentance and

tears. Let us enter into ourselves; let us consider our unclean hearts in all strictness, and when we see what a multitude of impurities are keeping them from the reach of Divine grace, we shall ourselves acknowledge that we are spiritually dead.

The loving Lord is here: how can I let even a shadow of evil enter into my heart? Let all evil completely die within me; let my heart be anointed with the sweet fragrance of goodness as with a balsam. Let God's love conquer thee, thou evil Satan, instigating us, who are evil by nature, to evil. Evil is most hurtful both to the mind and to the body. It burns, it crushes, and it tortures. No one bound by evil shall dare to approach the throne of the God of love.

When praying, we must absolutely subject our heart to our will, and turn it towards God. It must be neither cold, crafty, untruthful, nor double-minded, otherwise what will be the use of our prayers, of our preparation for the Sacrament? It is good for us to hear God's voice of anger: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." [St. Matthew XV 8] So do not let us stand in church in a state of spiritual prostration, but let the spirit of each one of us on such occasions burn in its working towards God. Even men do not much value the services which we render to them coldly, out of habit. And God requires our hearts. "My son, give Me thine heart." [Proverbs XXIII 2] Because the heart is the principal part of the man—his life. More than this, the heart is the man himself. Thus he who does not pray or does not serve God with his heart, does not pray at all, because in that case his body only prays, and the body without the mind is nothing more than earth. Remember, that when standing in prayer, you stand before God Himself, who has the wisdom of all. Therefore, your prayer ought to be, so to say, all spirit, all understanding.

The saints of God live even after their death. Thus. I often hear in church the Mother of God singing her wonderful, heart-penetrating song which she said in the house of her cousin Elizabeth, after the Annunciation of the Archangel. At times, I hear the song of Moses; the song of Zacharias—the father of the Forerunner; that of Hannah, the mother of the prophet Samuel; that of the three children; and that of Miriam. And how many holy singers of the New Testament delight until now the ear of the whole Church of God! And the Divine service itself—the sacraments, the rites? Whose spirit is there, moving and touching our hearts? That of God and of His saints. Here is a proof for you of the immortality of men's souls.

How is it that all these men have died, and yet are governing our lives after their death—they are dead and they still speak, instruct and touch us?

As the breath is necessary for the body, and as without breathing men cannot live, so likewise the soul cannot truly live without the breath of God's Spirit. As air is necessary for the body, so is the Holy Ghost for the soul. Air has some likeness to the Holy Ghost. As "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." [St. John III 8]

When you are threatened with temptation to sin, then represent to yourself vividly that sin is exceedingly displeasing to God, Who hates Iniquity. "Thou hatest all workers of iniquity." [Psalm V 5] And in order to understand this better, imagine a father, righteous and severe, who loves his family, and is trying by every means to make his children well-principled and upright, in order to reward them afterwards for their good behaviour by the great riches he has laboriously laid up for them, and, who nevertheless sees, to his grief, that the children, disregarding their father's love, do not love him, do not pay attention to the inheritance so lovingly prepared for them by their father, but live disorderly, and rush impetuously to destruction. Mark, that "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death," [James I 15 and others] because it kills the soul, because it makes us the slaves of the Devil—the destroyer of men; and the more we work for sin, the more difficult will be our return, and the more sure will be our ruin. Dread, therefore, every sin with the whole heart.

When your heart inclines to evil, and the evil one begins to undermine your heart, so that it is completely removed from the rock of faith, then say to yourself inwardly: "I know of my spiritual poverty, my own nothingness without faith. I am so weak, that it is only by Christ's name that I live and obtain peace, that I rejoice and my heart expands, whilst without Him I am spiritually dead, I am troubled, and my heart is oppressed; without the Lord's Cross I should have been long since the victim of the most cruel distress and despair. Only Christ keeps me alive: and the Cross is my peace and my consolation."

We are all able to think, because an unlimited Wisdom (Thought) exists, just as we are able to breathe because unlimited air-spaces exist. This is the reason why bright ideas upon any subject are called inspirations. Our thoughts are constantly flowing conditionally with the existence of the

unlimited Spirit of Wisdom (Thought). This is why the Apostle says: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God" [Corinthians III 5] This is also why the Saviour Himself says: — "Take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak." [St. Matthew X 19] Thus you see that the thought and even the word itself (the inspiration) come to us from without. This, of course, in a state of grace and in cases of need. But even in our ordinary state all our bright thoughts come from our Guardian Angel and from God's Spirit: whilst, on the contrary, impure, dark thoughts proceed from our corrupt nature and from the Devil, ever lying in wait for us. How then, should the Christian behave? "God Himself worketh in us." [Philippians II 13] In general, throughout the world we see the Kingdom of thought in the structure of the whole visible world, as also in particular in the earth, in the rotation and the life of the terrestrial globe; in the distribution of the elements—light, air, water, earth, fire (concealed), whilst other elements are diffused in all animals—in birds, fishes, reptiles, beasts, and men—in their wise and ingenious construction, in their faculties, nature and habits; in plants, in their construction, nourishment, etc.; in a word, we see everywhere the kingdom of thought, even down to the lifeless stone and sand.

Priests of God! learn how to turn the bed of sorrow of the Christian sufferer into one of joy by the consolation of faith; learn how to make him, instead of—in his opinion—the most unfortunate, the happiest of men; assure him that having been "a little chastised he shall be greatly rewarded afterwards," [Wisdom III] and you will be the friends of mankind, angels of consolation, instruments or ministers of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.

If the fervor of faith in the heart is not sometimes stirred up, then intine, through negligence, faith may become entirely extinguished in us; and Christianity with its Sacraments may entirely die for us. The enemy takes pains to attain this end, and tries to extinguish faith in our hearts and to bury in oblivion all the truths of Christianity. That is why we see men who, being Christians, are only such in name, while by their actions they are quite heathen.

Do not think that our faith is not vivifying to us—pastors—that we serve God hypocritically. No; we before all, and more than all, avail ourselves of God's mercies, and we know by experience what the Lord Himself is to us, His Sacraments, His most pure Mother, and His Saints. For instance, in partaking of the life-giving mysteries of the Blood

and Body of the Saviour, we often experience in ourselves their vivifying effect, the heavenly gifts of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; we know that the gracious gaze of a king does not rejoice the heart of the least of his subjects as the merciful gaze of our heavenly Master, as His mysteries rejoice our hearts. And we should have been most unthankful to the Lord, and our hearts would indeed have been hardened, had we not tried to make known the glory of God's Life-giving Mysteries unto His beloved, had we not extolled His wonders, accomplished in our hearts during each celebration of the Divine Liturgy. We also experience the effect of the invincible, incomprehensible, divine power of the Lord's glorious and life-giving Cross, and by its power we drive away from our hearts evil passions, despondency, pusillanimity, fear, and other snares of the Devil. The Cross is our friend and benefactor. I say this sincerely, with full belief in the truth and power of these words.

You wish to comprehend the incomprehensible; but can you understand how the inward sorrows with which your heart is overwhelmed overtake you, and can you find, except in the Lord, the means to drive them away? Learn at first, with your heart, how to free yourself from sorrows, how to ensure peace in your heart, and then, if necessary, philosophise on the incomprehensible, for "if ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?" [Luke XII 26]

Think oftener: Whose wisdom appears in the construction of your body? Who has ordered the laws of your thoughts, so that until now these laws are followed by all men? Who has engraved in the hearts of all men the law of conscience, so that until now it rewards the good and punishes the evil in all men? The Almighty, All-wise, and most gracious God! Thy hand is constantly upon me, a sinner, and there is no moment when Thy mercy leaves me. Grant me, then, always to kiss, with living faith. Thy gracious hand. Why should I go far to seek for the traces of Thy mercies, of Thy wisdom, and Thy omnipotence? O! how clearly these traces are visible to me! I, I myself am a miracle of God's goodness, wisdom and omnipotence. I myself—on a small scale—am a whole world; my soul is the representative of the invisible world; my body—of the invisible one.

Brethern! what is the purpose of our earthly life? It is, that, after our trial by earthly affliction and misfortunes, and after our gradual advancement in virtue, by means of the divine gifts, given to us in the sacraments, we may rest, after our death, in the Lord, the peace of our souls. That is why we sing of the dead: "Grant rest, O, Lord, to the soul

of Thy departed servant" We wish him to rest in peace, as the limit of all wishes, and pray to God for this. Is it not, then, unwise to grieve much for the departed? "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," [St. Matthew XI 28] says the Lord. Thus our departed ones, who have fallen asleep in a Christian death, came to this voice of God and obtain rest. What is there, then, to grieve for?

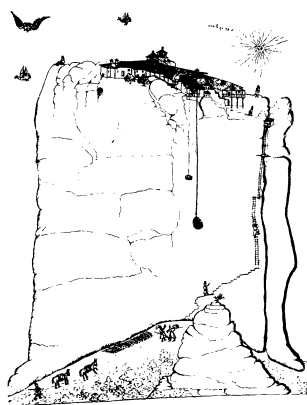
Those who are trying to lead a spiritual life have to cam on a most skilful and difficult warfare, through their thoughts, every moment of their life—that is a spiritual warfare: it is necessary that our whole soul should be every moment a clear eye, able to watch and notice the thoughts entering our heart from the evil one and repel them: the hearts of such men should be always burning with faith, humility and love; otherwise the subtlety of the Devil finds an easy access to them, followed by a diminution of faith, or entire unbelief, and then by every possible evil, which it will be difficult to wash away even by tears. Do not, therefore, allow your heart to be cold, especially during prayer, and avoid every way cold indifference. Very often it happens that prayer is on the lips, but in the heart cunning, incredulity or unbelief, so that by the lips the man seems near to God, whilst in his heart he is far from Him. And. during our prayers, the evil one makes use of every means to chill our hearts and fill them with deceit in a most imperceptible manner to us. Pray and fortify yourself, fortify your heart.

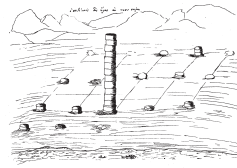
If you wish to ask of God in prayer any blessing for yourself, then before praying prepare yourself for undoubting and firm faith, and take in good time means against doubt and unbelief. For it will go ill with you if during the prayer itself your heart wavers its faith and does not stand firm in it; then do not even expect to obtain of the Lord what you have prayed for doubtfully, for in so doing you have offended the Lord, and God does not bestow His gifts upon a reviler. "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," [St. Matthew XXI 22] said the Lord. This means, that you doubt and do not believe, you shall not receive. "If ye have faith and doubt not," said He also, "ye shall have power to move mountains." [St Matthew XXI 3] Therefore, if you doubt and do not believe, you shall not have power to do so. "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." says the Apostle James; "for let not that man think he shall receive anything of the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." [James I 6–7] The heart that doubts that God can grant what it asks for is punished for this doubt: it is painfully oppressed and contracted

by doubt. Do not anger Almighty God even by a shade of doubt—especially you, who have already experienced many and many times, the omnipotence of God. Doubt is a blasphemy against God, an insolent lie of the heart or of the lying spirit that nestles in the heart, against the spirit of truth. Fear it as you would fear a venomous serpent, or no—what I would rather say is, despise it, do not take the slightest heed of it. Remember that God, during your prayer, is waiting for your affirmative answer to the question which He is inwardly asking you: “Believe ye that I am able to do this?” To which question you must from the depth of your heart reply, “Yea, Lord” [St Matthew IV 8] Let the following considerations also help you in your doubt or unbelief: I ask of God, firstly, that which already exists, and nothing merely imaginary not a fanciful good, and everything that exists receives its being from God: because “without Him, was not anything made that was made.” [St John I 3] and therefore, nothing that happens can happen without Him, and everything has either received its being from Him, or happens by His will or His permission, by

means of powers and faculties given by Him to His creatures—and in everything that exists or is still happening. God is an all-powerful Master. Besides this. “He calleth those things which He not as though they were.” [Romans IV 17] Therefore, had I even asked for that which does not exist. He could give it to me by creating it. Secondly, I ask of God what is possible, because what is impossible for us is possible for God; and there cannot be any difficulty even in this respect, because God can do for me even that which is impossible in my own opinion. It is our misfortune that our faith is hindered by the short-sightedness of our reason—that spider, that catches the truth in the web of its judgments, its arguments and analogies. Faith embraces and sees suddenly, whilst reason arrives at the truth by circuitous ways; faith is the means of communication between one spirit and another, whilst reason is the means of communication between the spiritually sensual and the spiritually sensual and even simply material: the first is the spirit and the latter the flesh.

TO BE CONTINUED





THE NEW RUSSIAN MARTYRS

Orthodox Life, 1950 (1), p. 18–22

I CONSIDER IT my duty as an Orthodox Christian and as a human being to relate the following experience to the people of the whole world. It is an account of how sixty Orthodox priests met a martyr's death in Soviet Siberia at the hands of the executioners—of which I was an eyewitness.

When I was acting as a watchman at a meteorological observatory. I was appointed in 1929 to the Regional Executive Committee (REC). As a member of REC I was sent to Leningrad. There an expeditionary party of fifteen men was formed of which I was one. It was my first trip to Siberia. Our destination was the town of Irkutsk.

The chief of our expeditionary party was Ivan Paramonovitch Golubev. He was an elderly man with two diplomas, ideally exact and punctual. At the same time he was polite and sympathetic, and gave his extremely ingenious advice to everyone who went to him.

By the 15th August 1929 we were in Irkutsk, 60 kilometers from Lake Baikal. The object of our expedition was to investigate ways of communication, to compare and collate schemes, and to examine and control the work of constructing a mecadamized highway between Irkutsk and Kuvtuk, 100 versts over the mountains beyond Lake Baikal. To go by train from Irkutsk to Kuvtuk meant a journey of 194 versts round Lake Baikal with 47 large and small tunnels.

From Irkutsk we traveled on horseback. We had four tents among us, and each of us had a traveller's folding bed. The road over the Transbaikal Mountains was wild and overgrown. We never met a soul. The stillness was wonderful. The scenery was magnificent. We collected cedar cones, and in the evening we roasted them in hot ashes and made our supper of them. They turned out to be delicious—like roasted nuts.

The first day we covered a distance of 30 kilometers quite safely and in good spirits. The rest of our journey was not so pleasant. It took us seven days to do the remaining 70 kilometers. We had to force our way through brush and fallen trees, and all the time we were followed by a grizzly bear, a so-called anteater, which did not allow us to sleep at night. Although we kept fires burning continually round our tents, yet the bear used to come so close that we heard the noise made by it. And what a noise it was! Sticks, pieces of wood and sometimes heavy stones came at us. This Siberian grizzly bear of ours gave us no peace with his practical jokes! True, we had rifles with us, but it was impossible to see far beyond the campfires. The howling of wolves, the sound of falling fir-cones, every rustle of leaves startled us and, voluntarily or involuntarily, we loudly invoked the name of God. Nowhere do you so believe in God as in the desert or in a dense forest. Regardless of all the conventions of soviet life, Ivan Paramonovitch often said to us: "Pray to God, and He will have mercy on us all, and we shall return home safe and sound to our homes and families."

We reached Kuvtuk and finished all the work we had been sent to do. Late in the autumn we returned to Irkutsk.

Just at that time a wave of godless communism was raging in Irkutsk. Only two months previously, in August 1929, almost in the center of the town, near Tihkonov Square (changed by the Bolsheviks to Lenin Square), the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist had been the cynosure of all eyes. But now, in the place where the Cathedral had stood, we saw only a heap of rubble. The Cathedral had been blown up. As our group passed the spot, somehow or other we all suddenly came to a standstill at the sight of such vandalism, and Ivan Paramonovitch drew a deep sigh and said: "Who did it disturb?"

We were resting in Irkutsk before our second journey, when Ivan Paramonovitch proposed that we should go to a village on the outskirts of the town called Glaskovo to see a monastery. We drove there in carriages.

On crossing the pontoon bridge over the River Angara, we at once saw a large, white-stoned monastery and a crowd of people beside it. As we joined the crowd we saw that many of the people had tears in their eyes. In the monastery enclosure stood two horses harnessed to Siberian two-wheeled carts. Cats-paws of some kind were throwing icons and other church property out of the monastery, while others were loading them on to the carts. One of these wretched creatures was particularly blasphemous. He was smashing the icons and reviling the images depicted on them in every possible way. At last he shouted loudly: "Ah, yes! There are those incorrupt relics still left. Now we shall see how incorrupt they are!" So saying, he rushed into the monastery and in a few minutes came out carrying a coffin in his hands. The fool put the coffin on the left side of one of the carts and then sat on the holy relics. With a self-satisfied look, he lit a cigar. But the horses started off on their own. Three minutes had not passed when the horse which the atheist was driving suddenly jumped aside off the road and bolted. The godless activist was hurled from the cart with terrific force, broke two ribs and fractured his left arm. The crowd gasped and people told one another it was God's punishment.

On December 18th we started out on our second journey, this time down the River Angara. We had to pass through Kamenka (Angarstroy). There we saw the famous Alexandrovsky Central Prison, and were entertained by the Buryats.¹ Our final point and destination was the village of Morozovo in Tcheremhovsky Province. There once again we witnessed the wrath of God.

The President of the Morozov town council received an order from the Regional Executive Committee to take the bells from the church. Some ardent atheists were found who were ready to carry out this infernal act. But what was the result? One of them, as his wife told us later, on returning home after this sacrilegious operation, asked his wife to make some tea. His wife placed a glass of tea before him and also gave him a soft doughnut. The atheist began to eat the doughnut: but he choked with the first bite, and died.

At the end of January 1930 we returned to Leningrad. In 1931, 1932 and 1933 I went every year on a fresh expedition to Siberia. One summer's

night of the year 1933, on account of its black horror, will remain indelibly in my memory for the rest of my life.

In July 1933 our expedition party stopped for the night in the forest on the Katehoog-NizhniOODinsk road. It was a clear, still night; somewhere nearby a stream was chattering caressingly, the trees were whispering softly in the breeze, and the perfumes of the forest flowers floated down the valley. That valley I shall never forget; I shall remember it for ever! Till late at night we were sitting cheerfully at the camp fire and talking peacefully without the least suspicion that on this very spot a ghastly tragedy was to be enacted.

Our light, forest sleep was interrupted by raucous and peremptory shouts. We jumped to our feet. The leader of our expedition, Boris Nikolaevitch Martyshovsky, a native of Irkutsk, seized his binoculars, while others set the two surveyor's levels and began to look in the direction from which the voices came. And at once we saw a crowd of men moving in our direction. Who were they and where had they come from in the middle of the night and in a deserted forest? Perhaps it was a hallucination.

It was no hallucination. The crowd came nearer and nearer driven on by insolent and peremptory shouts, the cause of which we could not yet make out. But now we could see the men's faces and clothes. They were living skeletons wrapped in fantastic rags. Over the shoulder of each of these skeletons was a rope, and behind the crowd a barrel was mounted on some kind of a fatuous carriage. The skeletons were pulling it. We afterwards learnt that the barrel was full of human excreta. One of our expedition who did not lose his presence of mind even at the sight of that outrageous spectacle, managed to count the crowd. There were sixty of them. On each side of the crowd marched convoys in semi-military uniform, armed with rifles; and it was they who were shouting.

Noticing the camp of our expedition, one of the convoys signaled to the crowd to stop, and in pure Siberian chekist jargon shouted loudly in our direction: "Flop and don't flap an eyelid!" ("Lie down and don't move!") One of the convoy began to run back, evidently having received an order.

About ten minutes later a whole platoon of armed men appeared. They advanced towards us with their rifles at the ready. The commander of the platoon and the political officer² came out towards us. They asked who we are and demanded identity documents. After that, the platoon commander asked us sternly what grounds we had for camping

¹ *Buryats*
A Siberian tribe of
Mongolian origin

² In the Red Army each
rank has its political
counterpart, so that
there is an army captain,
and a political captain,
a general and a political
general etc. The political
officer's business
is to spy on the army
officers.

✠ *Pop*: a vulgar word for priest (cp. pope, papa etc.)...

on territory belonging to a government forced labor concentration camp of the N.K.V.D. (secret police). We told him that we had not the slightest idea that there was a concentration camp in the vicinity and that it was not marked on the map, and he seemed satisfied with our answer. He then told us that we must be as dumb as fish, and he explained with pathos that we were accidentally having the honor of being present at one of the most glorious operations of the VTK-GPU (another name for N.K.V.D.), the fiery sword of the proletarian revolution. "Those people," he said, pointing at the unfortunate victims, "are sentenced to be shot, and you of course will not pity them. They are devils of darkness, useless 'pops,' ✠ dope of the people." The commander ordered us to go into our tents, while he told one of the guards who accompanied him to move the sentenced men towards the pit. Apparently there was a pit somewhere closeby. Dumb and petrified with horror, sick with disgust at the executioners, and ashamed of our own cowardice and fear, we sat in our tents listening tensely for the approaching silence of death. But there was again the sound of human voices.

"You are breathing last breath. Say, is there a God?"

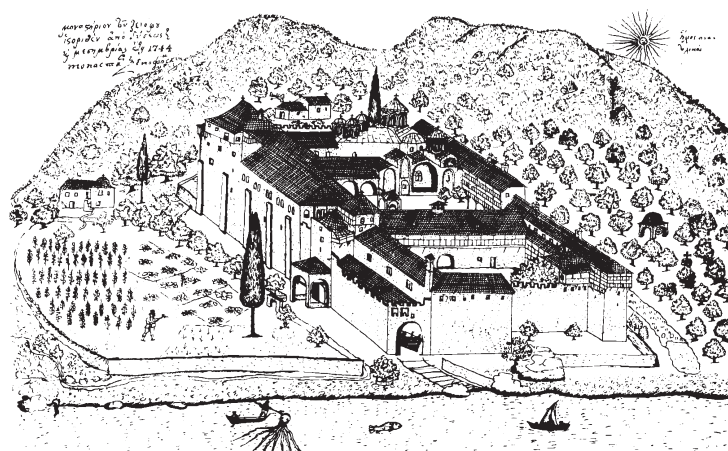
"I believe in one God the Father, Almighty Creator," sang a meek voice.

The report of a rifle! There was a lump in our hearts as we sat in our tents. Then a second report, a third... Evidently the condemned men were being introduced to the pit one by one. And again more than once the same wooden, lifeless voice asked: "Is there a God? Speak!"

"All-Seeing, All-Knowing, Omnipresent, Almighty, All-Merciful, All-Good!" was the reply.

Many years, perhaps, will pass, but that grave on the Katchoog-Nizhnioudinsk road will be found and will draw crowds of pilgrims who will visit the unknown Siberian forest in order to offer their fervent prayers to the holy martyrs of the Orthodox faith who gave their lives for our Lord Jesus Christ.

M. G.





Gleb Podmoshensky

“BISHOP INNOCENT”

BOOK REVIEW

The Orthodox Word, 1965, Vol. 1, No. 1, January-February, p. 37-40

BISHOP INNOCENT, FOUNDER OF AMERICAN ORTHODOXY

BY PROCIOUS YASUO USHIMARU

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE. BRIDGEPORT, CONN., 1964

IF FR. HERMAN of Alaska was to America what the Apostles Andrew the First called, Peter, and John the Theologian were to Christendom as a whole, then Metropolitan Innocent of Moscow could rightly be called the St. Paul of America. His work on this continent is as good a model as any of the true missionary spirit. His significance continues to be immense even to this day; but despite the fact that one can not imagine the history of Orthodoxy in America without him, up to now there has actually been no literature on him in English. Thanks to a young Orthodox Japanese priest, at least a brief biographical account has now been made available, and we highly recommend it to all who know little about this important Church Father of the 19th century who was one of the greatest missionaries of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The main accomplishments of his life may be briefly set forth. Brought up in Irkutsk under the heavenly protection of St. Innocent of that city, he went as a young man in 1624 to Alaska as a missionary, taking with him wife, mother, and children. Settling in Unalaska, he built all by himself a house for his family and a church. He studied the local languages, compiled an Aleutian alphabet

and grammar, and himself wrote the first work to appear in the Aleutian language. He translated the Gospel of St. Matthew, the Divine Liturgy, and a short catechism into Aleutian. His geographical, ethnographic, and social descriptions of the islands are considered very valuable. An able educator, he opened a missionary school with a dormitory for 100 boys and taught not only grammar and Divine Law, but various crafts as well. He was also a physician to the local populace. When he became a bishop in Sitka, he founded a seminary and personally administered it for the nine years he was there. As an archbishop in Siberia he traveled thousands of miles under extremely difficult conditions in the performance of his pastoral duties. Finally, in 1868 he was elected the successor of the famous Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, and in this post reorganized the Orthodox Missionary Society, which operated with conspicuous success until 1917.

It seems, at first sight, a curious fact that the work of education and enlightenment of such a great man should have passed into such apparent oblivion and not been continued by his immediate successors; but the explanation of this is actually quite simple. His work, like all the missionary activity

of the Russian Church, was directed to the conversion of the pagan inhabitants of the Russian land, i.e., those who had never known Christ; that was Russia's sacred mission and the real reason for the growth of the Empire. The people he educated were Aleuts and Indians who, with the sale of Alaska to the United States, were to be engulfed by an entirely different cultural heritage—the 19th-century Anglo-Saxon. The episcopal see was moved in 1872 to San Francisco, and in 1905 to New York, and during this time when the Church found itself in an English-speaking environment there was no missionary undertaking to the least resembling that of Bishop Innocent. By an article inserted at the insistence of Bishop Innocent into the agreement whereby Alaska was sold, all Church property remained in the possession of the Russian Church, and a decision of the Holy Synod provided one per cent of the purchase price yearly (\$72,000) as financial support for the Church in America; nonetheless, effective contact with the mother country was broken off and a new chapter was begun in the Orthodox mission to America. Metropolitan Innocent remained a model inspiration and encouragement, but a new problem presented itself to the Orthodox missionary in America: the preaching of an Orthodox Christian message among non-Orthodox Christians. The Orthodox position in this new environment became uncertain. The clergy became rather emigrants than missionaries, and the process of Americanization—i.e., assimilation by the non-Orthodox environment—automatically opposed the spread of Orthodoxy. Attempts were made to use English more widely in Church services, especially while the future Patriarch Tikhon was head of the Orthodox Church in America, but the work required too much time and conditions were not favorable. Then the Resolution in Russia introduced complications into Church life in America from which Orthodoxy has not recovered to this day.

Turning back to the book that names Metropolitan Innocent in its title “the founder of American Orthodoxy,” one can hardly agree with this assertion. He never had the opportunity to plant the seeds of Orthodox Truth in the ground of Anglo-Saxon America, as the foreword would lead one to believe. Father Herman might be taken as the symbolic founder of American Orthodoxy in general, since his example is purely a spiritual one and he lives on in the hearts of praying Christians and in the life of the Church as She chants, “a righteous man lives forever.” Metropolitan Innocent's labors, on the other hand, were in the practical realm of religious education directed to one small group of Americans; in this sense he might be called the founder of Alaskan or Aleutian Orthodoxy (which,

incidentally, has since not enjoyed the attention and love he devoted to it and has in fact been sadly neglected). Orthodoxy in America today has no founder in this practical sense as had, to take another nearby example, Japanese Orthodoxy in the person of the great missionary Nicholas Kassatkin; it rather has taken shape under the influence of historical vicissitudes.

All of these reflections lead up to a single question which many Orthodox in this country, probably, have already asked themselves: what is the purpose and goal of Orthodoxy in America, what is its reason for being? Lacking the direction and example supplied by a literal founder, where is American Orthodoxy to find its inspiration and guide for the future?

To reason in this way is, perhaps, to make the situation more complicated than it actually is. It is true enough that the physical, and even more the psychological, conditions and obstacles facing the Orthodox missionary in America today are quite different from those Bishop Innocent faced a century ago. The Christian life, however, has not changed. In his book, *Indication of the Way into the Kingdom of Heaven*, written in 1833 and since translated into many languages, Bishop Innocent set forth the haste principles of the Christian life, emphasizing especially the carrying of one's cross in the daily toil of a life oriented not to oneself but to Christ. This is an aspect of Christianity not often emphasized today, but it is precisely that without which there is no Christianity at all.

Caught between the ever-increasing world anarchy and anti-Christianity that herald the approach of the lawless Antichrist, and the pointless optimism of an ecumenism that only uses Christianity for its own extraneous ends, all who would be faithful to the Lord in these perilous times must return to this unromantic but absolutely central message of Christian living. Bishop Innocent, resourceful as he was, would no doubt have skillfully utilized or devised means appropriate to our time with which to make this message alive for men today; and we who follow him, even with our poor means, have still the same message to preach.

Our inspiration, our guide, our missionary purpose as Orthodox Christians in America—are nothing but life in Christ. Divine Providence has dispersed Orthodox Christians throughout the world, not by chance, but to be witnesses of Christian Truth and examples of Christian life. In our day when very little organized missionary activity exists as such, every Orthodox Christian becomes a missionary to those among whom he lives. Our very existence

in a non-Orthodox land is a missionary witness; we are each of us responsible for carrying on, in some small way, that part of the labors of Bishop

Innocent which is not regional but universal, because it concerns personal holiness. May every Orthodox Christian in America reflect well on this!

On concern for the salvation of our neighbors

"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth"

1 Corinthians 10:24

This is the principle of the saints of God, both now and in the past, always and forever. This is the principle on which society is built. Upon this principle can be established the most perfect, most God-pleasing and most prosperous human society. This is the saving principle for every type of difficulty, against which contemporary men struggle without victory and without hope. The holy soul is concerned with where the homeless will spend the night, how the hungry will be fed, how the naked will be clothed. The holy soul is concerned, and prays to God that his neighbors be saved; that their hearts be filled with love toward God; that their minds be directed toward God; that the wicked turn from the path of wickedness; that those wavering in the Faith be strengthened; that those who are strengthened be sustained; that those who have died see the face of God; that the living be written in the Book of Life in the Kingdom of Light. But beware, brethren, and see how the destructive and antisocial principle of the devil can be phrased in like manner, word for word. This principle of the devil says: No one should look to his own body to preserve it in purity from sin, but rather everyone should look to the bodies of others in order to ruin and to destroy them. No one should look to his own soul to see how to save it; rather everyone should look to the soul of someone else in order to blacken it, to curse it, to impoverish it and to destroy it. Let no one look at his house in order to build it and renew it; rather, let everyone look at the home of another in order to burn it and demolish it. No one should look at his granaries in order to fill them; rather, one should look at the granaries of others in order to steal from them and empty them. Behold, brethren, how this principle can be a principle either of good or of evil; it is a sharp two-edged sword, an angel or Satan. See how this principle in the satanic spirit and form has gained momentum on all sides today! O Lord, Holy Spirit, Who, through the tongue of the apostle of God, has released these holy words in the world, as bright rays of the sun to illuminate and not to burn us, help us now to fulfill them in the proper heavenly sense--to the glory of the Triune God and for the salvation of our souls.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.



Abp. John Maximovitch *The Orthodox Veneration of the Mother of God*

BOOK REVIEW

Living Orthodoxy, Volume I, No. 1, Great Lent 1979, p. 27

ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA BROTHERHOOD, PLATINA, CA 96,076

ARCHBISHOP JOHN, standing firmly in the Holy Tradition of the Fathers, makes no attempt to “theologize” concerning Our Lady in the modernist fashion. Rather, dwelling securely in the facts of history and the Truth of the Faith, he brings to our attention in an easily read and yet in no way oversimplified style the true Orthodox teaching concerning Mary the Mother of God. The simplicity with which he speaks (and which the translators preserve) betrays no simple-mindedness—enters fully into the deepest problems which have arisen in the history of the Church’s understanding of the role of Mary.

The chapter on the Immaculate Conception, “Zeal not According to Knowledge,” is of particular value to those who seek to understand the true teaching of the Church concerning Mary’s sinlessness, and the impropriety of the Western attempt to respond to it. Of particular importance to

Westerners is Abp. John’s citation of the views of several Western luminaries (notably Bernard of Clairvaux) on the question.

The introduction by one of the fathers at St. Herman’s stands in its own right as a valuable gateway to perception of the proper balance of heart and mind in response to Holy Tradition—a

badly needed corrective in a society in which “heart” has deteriorated almost entirely into emotionalism, and in which “mind” has in consequence deteriorated into arrogant rationalism. We court constantly the risk that “by thinking oneself wiser than the tradition one may end by losing the tradition.” (p. 7)

This book is perhaps the best single work on its subject we have seen. Its value is the greater for the spirit of understanding which it conveys a spirit which is truly Orthodox, and yet fully intelligible to anyone with ears to hear.





Saint John Chrysostom

GOD

RIGHTEOUS JUDGE AND MERCIFUL FATHER



Homily XXV on the Epistle to the Romans

Translated by J. Walker, J. Sheppard and H. Browne, and revised by George B. Stevens.

Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, Vol. 11. Edited by Philip Schaff

Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1889

IT IS NOT of our own sins only that we shall have to give an account, but for those also wherein we cause others to offend. For if that account, were even by itself hard to pass, when these be added too, how are we to be saved? And let us not suppose, that if we can find accomplices in our sins, that will be an excuse; as this will prove an addition to our punishment. Since the serpent too was punished more than the woman, as was the woman likewise more than the man [1 Timothy 2:14]; and Jezebel also was punished more severely than Ahab, who had seized the vineyard; for it was she that devised the whole matter, and caused the king to offend [1 Kings 21:23-29]. And therefore thou, when you are the author of destruction to others, will suffer more severely than those who have been subverted by you. For sinning is not so ruinous as leading others also into the same. Wherefore he speaks of those who “not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.” [Romans 1:32] And so when we see any sinning, let us, so far from thrusting them on, even pull them back from the pit of iniquity, that we may not have to be punished for the ruin of others besides ourselves. And let us be continually in mind of the awful judgment-seat, of the stream of fire, of the chains never to be loosed, of the darkness with no light, the gnashing of teeth, and the venomous worm.

“Ah, but God is merciful!” Are these then mere words? And was not that rich man punished for despising Lazarus? Are not the foolish virgins cast out of the Bride-chamber? Do not they who did not feed Him go away into “the fire prepared for the devil?” [Matthew 25:41] Will not he that has soiled garments be “bound hand and foot” [Matthew 22:13], and go to ruin? Will, not he that demanded the hundred pence to be paid, be given over to the tormentors? Is not that said of the adulterers true, that “their worm shall not die, nor their fire be quenched?” [Mark 9:43] Are these but mere threats then? Yea, it is answered. And from what source pray do you venture to make such an assertion, and that too when you pass judgment of your own opinion? Why, I shall be able to prove the contrary, both from what He said, and from what He did. See John 5:22: For if you will not believe by the punishments that are to come, at least believe by those that have happened already. For what have happened, and have come forth into reality, surely are not threats and words. Who then was it that flooded the whole world, and affected that baleful wreck, and the utter destruction of our whole race! Who was it that after this hurled those thunders and lightnings upon the land of Sodom? Who that drowned all Egypt in the sea? Who that consumed the six hundred thousand men in the wilderness? Who that burnt up the synagogue of Abiram? Who

that bade the earth open her mouth for the company of Core and Dathan, and swallow them up? Who that carried off the threescore and ten thousand at one sweep in David's time? Shall I mention also those that were punished individually! Cain, who was given up to a continual vengeance? (the son of) Charmi, who was stoned with his whole family? Or him, that suffered the same thing for gathering sticks on the sabbath? The forty children who were consumed by those beasts, and obtained no pardon even on the score of their age? And if you would see these same things even after the times of grace, just consider what great suffering the Jews had, how the women ate their children, some roasting them, and some consuming them in other ways: how after being given up to irremediable famine, and wars varied and severe, they threw all previous catastrophes into the shade by the exceeding greatness of their own calamities. For that it was Christ Who did these things unto them, hear Him declaring as much, both by parables, and clearly and explicitly. By parables, as when He says, "But those that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them" [Luke 19:27]; and by that of the vineyard, and that of the marriage. But clearly and explicitly, as when He threatens that they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into the nations, and there shall be upon the earth "distress of nations with perplexity, at the roaring of the sea and waves; men's hearts failing them for fear." [ib. 21:24, 25, 26.] "And there shall be tribulation, such as there never was, no, nor ever shall be." [Matthew 24:21] And what a punishment Ananias too and Sapphira suffered, for the theft of a few pieces of money, you all know.

Do you see not the daily calamities also? Or have these too not taken place? Do you see not now men that are pining with famine? Those that suffer elephantiasis, or are maimed in body? Those that live in constant poverty, those that suffer countless irreparable evils? Now then will it be reasonable for some to be punished, and some not? For if God be not unjust (and unjust He is not), thou also will assuredly suffer punishment, if you sin. But if because He is merciful He does not punish, then ought not these either to have been punished. But now because of these words of yours, God even here punishes many, that when you believe not the words of the threatening, the deeds of vengeance ye may at least believe.

And since things of old do not affright you so much, by things which happen in every generation, He corrects those that in every generation are growing listless. And what is the reason, it may be said, why He does not punish all here? That He

may give the others an interval for repentance. Why then does He not take vengeance upon all in the next world? It is lest many should disbelieve in His providence. How many robbers are there who have been taken, and how many that have left this life unpunished? Where is the mercy of God then? It is my turn now to ask of you. For supposing no one at all had vengeance taken upon him, then you might have taken refuge in this. But now that some are punished, and some are not, though they be the worse sinners, how can it be reasonable that there be not the same punishments for the same sins? How can those punished appear to be else than wronged? What reason is there then why all are not punished here? Hear His own defense for these things. For when some had died by the falling of a tower on them: He said to those who raised a question upon this, "Suppose ye that they were sinners above all men? I tell you nay, but except ye repent, you shall all likewise perish" [Luke 13:4-5]; so exhorting us not to feel confident when others suffer punishment, and we ourselves, though we have committed many transgressions, do not. For except we change our conduct, we assuredly shall suffer.

And how, it may be said, is it that we are to be punished without end for sinning a short time here? How, I ask, is it that in this world, those who in a short moment of time have done one murder, are condemned to constant punishment in the mines? "But it is not God that does this," it may be said. How then came He to keep the man with a palsy for thirty and eight years in so great punishments? For that it was for sins that He punished him, hear what He says, "Behold, you are made whole, sin no more." [John 5:14] Still it is said, he found a release. But the case is not so with the other life. For that there, there will never be any release, hear from His own mouth, "Their worm will not die, nor their fire be quenched." [Mark 9:44] And "these shall go into everlasting life, but these into everlasting punishment." [Matthew 25:46] Now if the life be eternal, the punishment is eternal. Do you see not how severely He threatened the Jews? Then have the things threatened come to pass, or were those that were told them a mere talk? "One stone shall not remain upon another." [Luke 21:6] And has it remained? But what, when He says, "There shall be tribulation such as has not been?" [Matthew 24:21] Has it not come then? Read the history of Josephus, and you will not be able to draw your breath even, at only hearing what they suffered for their doings.

This I say, not that I may pain you, but that I may make you secure, and lest by having humored you overmuch, I should but make a way for the

endurance of sorer punishments. For why, pray, do you not deem it right you should be punished for sinning? Hath He not told you all beforehand? Hath He not threatened you? Not come to your aid? not done things even without number for your salvation's sake? Gave He you not the laver of Regeneration, and forgave He not all your former sins? Hath He not after this forgiveness, and the laver, also given you the succor of repentance if you sin? Hath He not made the way to forgiveness of sins, even after all this, easy to you? Hear then what He has enjoined: "If you forgive your neighbor, I also will forgive you" [Matthew 6:14], He says. What hardship is there in this? "If you judge the cause of the fatherless, and see that the widow have right, come and let us converse together," He says, "and if your sins be as purple, I will make them white as snow." [Isaiah 1:17-18] What labor is there here? "Tell your sins, that you may be justified." [Isaiah 43:26]. What hardship is there in this? "Redeem your sins with alms." [Daniel 4:24] What toilsomeness is there in this? The Publican said, "Be merciful to me a sinner," and "went down home justified." [Luke 18:13-14] What labor is it to imitate the Publican? And will you not be persuaded even after this that there is punishment and vengeance? At that rate you will deny that even the devil is punished. For, "Depart," He says, "into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels." [Matthew 25:41]

Now if there be no hell, then neither is he punished. But if he is punished, it is plain that we shall also. For we also have disobeyed, even if it be not in the same way. And how do you come not to be afraid to speak such daring things? For when you say that God is merciful, and does not punish, if He should punish he will be found in your case to be no longer merciful. See then unto what language the devil leads you? And what are the monks that have taken up with the mountains, and yield examples of such manifold self-denial, to go away without their crown? For if the wicked are not to be punished, and there is no recompense made to any one, some one else will say, perhaps, that neither are the good crowned. Nay, it will be said, For this is suitable with God, that there should be a kingdom only, and not a hell. Well then, shall the whoremonger, and the adulterer, and the man who has done evils unnumbered, enjoy the same advantages with the man who has exhibited soberness and holiness, and Paul is to stand with Nero, or rather even the devil with Paul? For if there be no hell and yet there will be a Resurrection of all, then the wicked will attain to the same good things! And who would say this? Who even of men that were quite crazed? Or rather, which of the devils even would say this? For even they confess

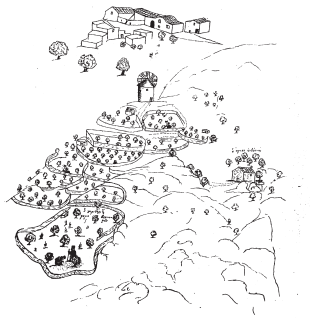
that there is a hell. Wherefore also they cried out and said, "Have You come hither to torment us before the time?" [Matthew 8:29]

How then do you come not to fear and tremble, when even the devils confess what yourself art denying? Or how is it that thou dost not see who is the teacher of these evil doctrines? For he who deceived the first man, and under the pretext of greater hopes, threw them out even of the blessings they had in possession, he it is who now suggests the saying and fancying of these things. And for this reason he persuades some to suspect there is no hell, that he may thrust them into hell. As God on the other hand threatens hell, and made hell ready, that by coming to know of it you might so live as not to fall into hell. And yet if, when there is a hell, the devil persuades you to these things, how came the devils to confess it, if it did not exist, whose aim and desire it is that we should not suspect anything of the kind, that through fearlessness we might become the more listless, and so fall with them into that fire? How then (it will be said) came they to confess it? It was through their not bearing the compulsion laid upon them.

Taking all these things into consideration then, let those who talk in this way leave off deceiving both themselves and others since even for these words of theirs they will be punished for detracting (διασύροντες) from those awful things, and relaxing the vigor of many who are minded to be in earnest, and do not even do as much as those barbarians, for they, though they were ignorant of everything, when they heard that the city was to be destroyed, were so far from disbelieving, that they even groaned, and girded themselves with sackcloth, and were confounded, and did not cease to use every means until they had allayed the wrath.[Jonah 3:5] But do you, who hast had so great experience of facts and of teaching, make light of what is told you? The contrary then will be your fate. For as they through fear of the words had not to undergo the vengeance in act, so thou who despisest the threatening by words, will have to undergo the punishment in very deed. And if now what you are told seems a fable to you, it will not, however, seem so when the very things convince you, in that Day.

Have you never noticed what He did even in this world? How when He met with two thieves, He counted them not worthy of the same estate, but one He led into the Kingdom, and the other He sent away into Hell? And why speak I of a robber and murderer? For even the Apostle He did not spare, when he had become a traitor, but even when He saw him rushing to the halter, and hanging, and

bursting asunder in the midst (for he did “burst asunder, and all his bowels gushed out”) [Acts 1:18], still when He foresaw all these things, He let him suffer all the same, giving you from the present a proof of all that is in the other world also. Do not then cheat yourselves, through being persuaded of the devil. These devices are his. For if both judges, and masters, and teachers, and savages, respect the good, and punish the evil, with what reason is the contrary to be the case with God, while the good man and he who is not so are deemed worthy of the same estate? And when will they leave off their wickedness? For they who now are expecting punishment, and are among so many terrors, those from the judges and from the laws, and yet do not for this depart from iniquity; when on their departing this life they are to lay aside even this fear, and are not only not to



be cast into hell, but are even to obtain a kingdom; when will they leave doing wickedly? Is this then mercy, pray? To add to wickedness, to set up rewards for iniquity, to count the sober and the unchastened, the faithful and the irreligious, Paul and the devil, to have the same deserts? But how long am I to be trifling?

Wherefore I exhort you to get you free from this madness, and having grown to be your own masters, persuade your souls to fear and to tremble, that they may at once be saved from the hell to come, and may, after passing the life in this world soberly, attain unto the good things to come by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom and with Whom, be glory to the Father, and to the Holy Spirit, now and always, even unto all ages. Amen.

To be bribable means to not be a Christian. The Orthodox Fathers of the Church were not given to bribery or intimidation. Bribery in matters of the Faith is equal to Judas' betrayal of Christ for money. Such bribery was characteristic only of certain heretics. When Emperor Anastasius succumbed to the heresy of Euthychius, he rose up against the decisions of the Fourth Ecumenical Council [Chalcedon, 451 A.D] and wanted to outlaw those decisions. In order to win over the most distinguished representatives of the Church for himself, the emperor began to send them various gifts. St. Theodosius was the most renowned man in all of Palestine. The emperor sent him thirty liters of gold as a gift, supposedly for the needs of the monastery. By this, Theodosius immediately understood that the emperor wanted to bribe him. How wisely this saint of God acted! He did not want to keep the money for the monastery, even though it was in great need; neither did he want to return it to the emperor, lest the emperor become more embittered against Orthodoxy; thus he immediately distributed all the gold to the poor in the emperor's name. This charity strengthened his prayer to God for the emperor's correction and his return to the true path.

On the citizens of the other world

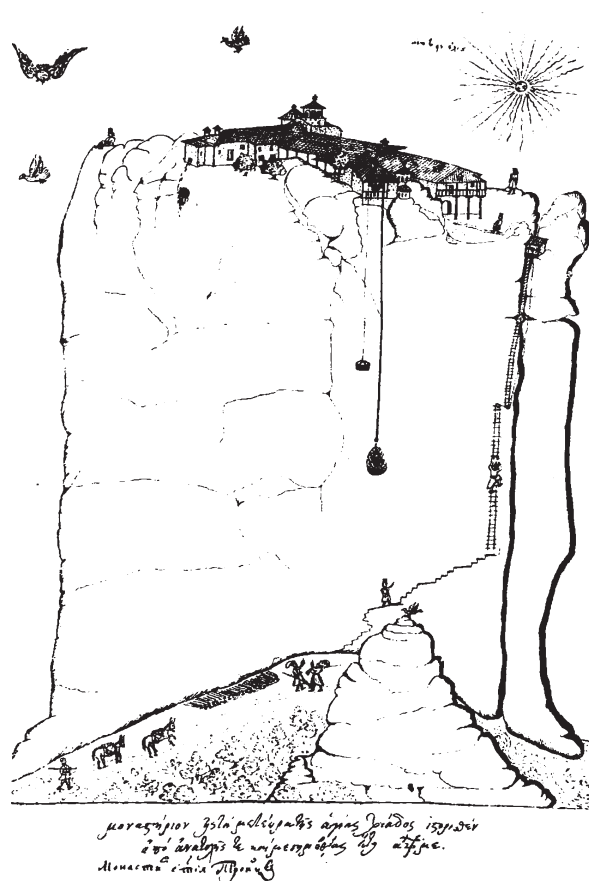
"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16)

Christ the Lord is not of this world, but rather is only in the vesture of this world. This is the Commander clad in the clothing of a slave in order to save the captive enslaved by sin, matter and Satan. As is the Commander, so are His soldiers. Even they, according to the spirit, are not of this world: they are not captives but free; they are not slaves but masters; they are not corruptible but immortal; they are not fallen but are saved. Such are all those whom Christ recruited and who, having tasted immortal life, willingly rejected the world and united themselves with Him, remaining faithful to Him until the end of their lives on earth. Abba Moses said: "No one can enter the army of Christ if he is not totally as fire, if he does not abhor honors and comfort, if he does not sever all bodily desires, and if he does not keep all of God's commandments." Judas was recruited, but he fell away and loved prison more than the royal court, slavery more than freedom, corruption more than immortality, and destruction more than salvation. But the other apostolic recruits, greater and lesser, remained faithful to Him to the end and achieved victory--that is why they are glorified both on earth among men and in heaven among the angels. All who are glorified by the world perish with the world, but those who are glorified by Christ are saved by Christ. The glory of the world is death, but the glory of Christ is life--life eternal and without death.



O Immortal Lord, even though we are of the world according to the body and sin, recruit us into Thine army--the army which, by Thy Spirit, power, wisdom and love, is not of this world. Do this so that, even when we die in this world, we may live in Thine Immortal Kingdom with the angels, apostles and saints, because of the love and prayers of Thy holy apostles.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen



The demons very much fear six virtues:
 1) **hunger**, 2) **thirst**, 3) the **Prayer of Jesus**, 4) the **sign of the Cross**, that is, he who makes the sign of the Cross correctly upon himself, 5) **frequent Communion** of the Most Pure Mysteries of Christ, if one worthily communes, and 6) **undoubting hope in God**. There is nothing more frightful than this weapon against the demons.

St. Paisius Velichkovsky